

# GURPS®

# CONAN®

## MOON OF BLOOD

*Solo Adventure in Robert E. Howard's Hyborian Age*



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Dedicated to Jovy, who has always had faith in me

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# STEVE JACKSON GAMES

# INSTRUCTIONS

## *The Original Story*

This adventure is based on "Moon of Blood," a Conan story written by L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter. It appears in the book *Conan the Swordsman*. If you haven't read the story, play this adventure first — that will preserve the surprises. Elements of this adventure have also been taken from other published Pictland adventures of Conan.

The continuing adventures of Conan are detailed in several other Steve Jackson Games solo adventures, including *Conan Beyond Thunder River*, *Conan and the Queen of the Black Coast*, and *Conan the Wyrmslayer*. Complete rules for adventuring in the Hyborian Age are provided in the *GURPS Conan* worldbook.

## *About Robert E. Howard*

Robert Ervin Howard was born in Peaster, Texas in 1906 and died in Cross Plains, Texas 30 years later. He completed high school and had a few hours of non-credit business college courses, but most of his education came through omnivorous reading.

From his late teens he supported himself principally as a freelance writer. In his brief life, he wrote stories for almost all the pulp-magazine genres, creating heroes such as Kull of Atlantis and Puritan adventurer Solomon Kane. But his greatest success came through *Weird Tales* magazine, which published his stories chronicling the Hyborian Age adventures of Conan of Cimmeria.

More than 50 years after his death, Howard's Conan stories not only remain in print, but are continued and elaborated on by a new generation of writers. Adaptations of his work have appeared as novels, short stories, comics, movies and adventure games.

## *About the Author*

W.G. Armintrout is a native Californian who has been working professionally in the game industry for over a decade. He now lives in Austin, Texas, where he divides his time between freelance writing and Jovialis, his editing company.

His previous work for Steve Jackson Games includes a *Car Wars* adventure (*Mean Streets*), a *GURPS Space/Horror* adventure (*Flight 13*), and four *GURPS* solo adventures: *Beyond Thunder River* and *Wyrmslayer* for *Conan*, *Up Harzburk!* for *Horsecrans*, and *For Love of Mother-Not*, a Pip-and-Flinx *Humanx* adventure.

*CONAN: Moon of Blood* is a *GURPS* solo adventure. You'll control a player character — Conan, or a hero of your own design — and this book will serve as the Game Master.

As you move through this adventure, you will make various choices. Each choice will send you to a different numbered paragraph, which will give you more information, more instructions and possibly call for more decisions.

Sometimes you will have to make attribute or skill rolls, to determine whether or not your character performs as you would like him to. Make these rolls according to normal *GURPS* rules, applying any modifiers called for.

The object is, of course, to survive and complete the adventure. If you don't succeed the first time . . . try again.

Good luck, and may Crom strike down your enemies!

## Getting Started

You will need a pencil, scratch paper, three six-sided dice, and the *GURPS Basic Set*. You will also need a character. A record sheet for Conan, the hero of the story this adventure is based on, can be found on p. 32. If you would rather play someone else, you may design your own character; guidelines for this are given on p. 25 of the appendix.

## How To Play

The adventure is divided into numbered paragraphs. *Do not read them in order* — they will make no sense at all. Rather, read the "Introduction" first, then turn to the paragraph to which it directs you. Read that paragraph, decide your course of action from that point, and then turn to the paragraph that your current paragraph directs you to. And so on.

Most paragraphs offer you at least two choices, and sometimes several. Sometimes you may choose freely; sometimes a roll against one of your skills or attributes will send you to other paragraphs. Sometimes you will fight a battle, the outcome of which will determine which paragraph you will turn to next.

## Plot Words

*Moon of Blood* can be different every time you play. To make sure that you stay on the same storyline for an entire run through the adventure, you may be asked to write down one or more *Plot Words*. From time to time, there will be instructions for characters who have certain of these special words — if you have a *Plot Word*, be sure to follow the special instructions which apply to it.

## Defaults

For your convenience, when a default skill roll is given in the adventure, the penalties for the original roll are already calculated in. If the regular roll is at a -2 penalty, for instance, and the default is given as DX-4, the -4 already includes the -2 penalty on the original roll.

## Healing

After any battle or encounter, the character may attempt to recover hit points lost in that action. Any conscious character, or one with a conscious partner, regains 1 HT due to bandaging. In addition, success at a First Aid roll (defaults to Physician, IQ-5, Veterinary-5, or Physiology-5) heals 1d-3 hit points (one

point minimum). On a critical success, the victim regains 3 HT (no roll required); on a critical failure, the victim loses 2 additional hit points *and* bandaging has no effect on this wound.

## The Mass Combat System

All the rules which you need to recreate the battles of the frontier are provided on p. 25 of the appendix. If you would like to learn more about the Mass Combat System in *GURPS*, complete rules are provided in the *GURPS Conan*, *GURPS Horseclans*, and *GURPS Japan* worldbooks.

## Death and Non-Player Characters

During the adventure, you will meet other soldiers — those under your command, as well as officers presiding over you — and they will be identified by their name (Arno or Flavius, for instance) throughout the book. However, there is a small chance that these characters may fall in battle early in the book, so that when you meet them again later in the adventure, they shouldn't be there (because they're dead). If this happens, mentally substitute the correct name — the character promoted to replace the slain comrade — for the individual who has passed on or otherwise been put out of action.

## Repeat Games

After you've played *Moon of Blood* several times, feel free to select your *Plot Words* or to choose your path, rather than always following the dictates of the dice. Explore all of the possibilities.

Eventually, you'll know the plot well enough to run this adventure for your friends. You can let them read the adventure (or read it to them), helping them with the game mechanics, or you can run this as a game-mastered adventure (for any number of player characters).

## Character Points

If you finish the adventure and your character is alive, turn to the *Character Points* section on p. 25. These character points will be useful if you continue to use your character in a campaign — and are an indicator of how well you did.



## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

*Roleplayer.* This bimonthly newsletter includes new rules, new races, beasts, information on upcoming releases, scenario ideas and more. Ask your game retailer, or write for subscription information.

*New supplements and adventures.* We're always working on new material, and we'll be happy to let you know what's available. A current catalog is available for an SASE.

*Errata.* Everyone makes mistakes, including us — but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request.

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*Computer bulletin board system (BBS).* For those of you who have home computers, SJ Games operates a BBS with discussion areas for several games, including *GURPS*. Much of the playtest feedback for new products comes from the BBS. It's up 24 hours a day at 512-447-4449, at 300 or 1200 baud. Give us a call!

## Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* — e.g., p. B102 means page 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition.

# INTRODUCTION

War has come to Aquilonia.

On the western banks of Thunder River, the savage Picts have destroyed a fort, plundered farmland, and reclaimed the wilderness that was once theirs. The tribes have united under the leadership of Zogar Sag, a wizard priest who was once thrown into the stockade by a provincial governor. That governor is now dead, buried in the smoldering ashes of Fort Tuscelan.

West of the river is the Westermarck, the frontier country of the kingdom of Aquilonia. The settlers in these provinces — Conawaga, Oriskonie, Schohira, and what is left of the overrun Conajohara — are citizens of the most powerful nation of Hyboria, but they are also frontiersmen. They know how to fight, and they are at home in the wilderness.

Unfortunately, Aquilonia does not stand united against its foe. King Numedides neglected to properly man Fort Tuscelan before the war, and continues to withhold troops from the threatened frontier. Meanwhile, the Westermarck provinces are squabbling among themselves — Baron Brocas of Conawaga has

already recalled the soldiers he sent to aid Conajohara, and he and Lord Thasperas of Schohira have both gone to the capital to press their claims to the remains of the lost province.

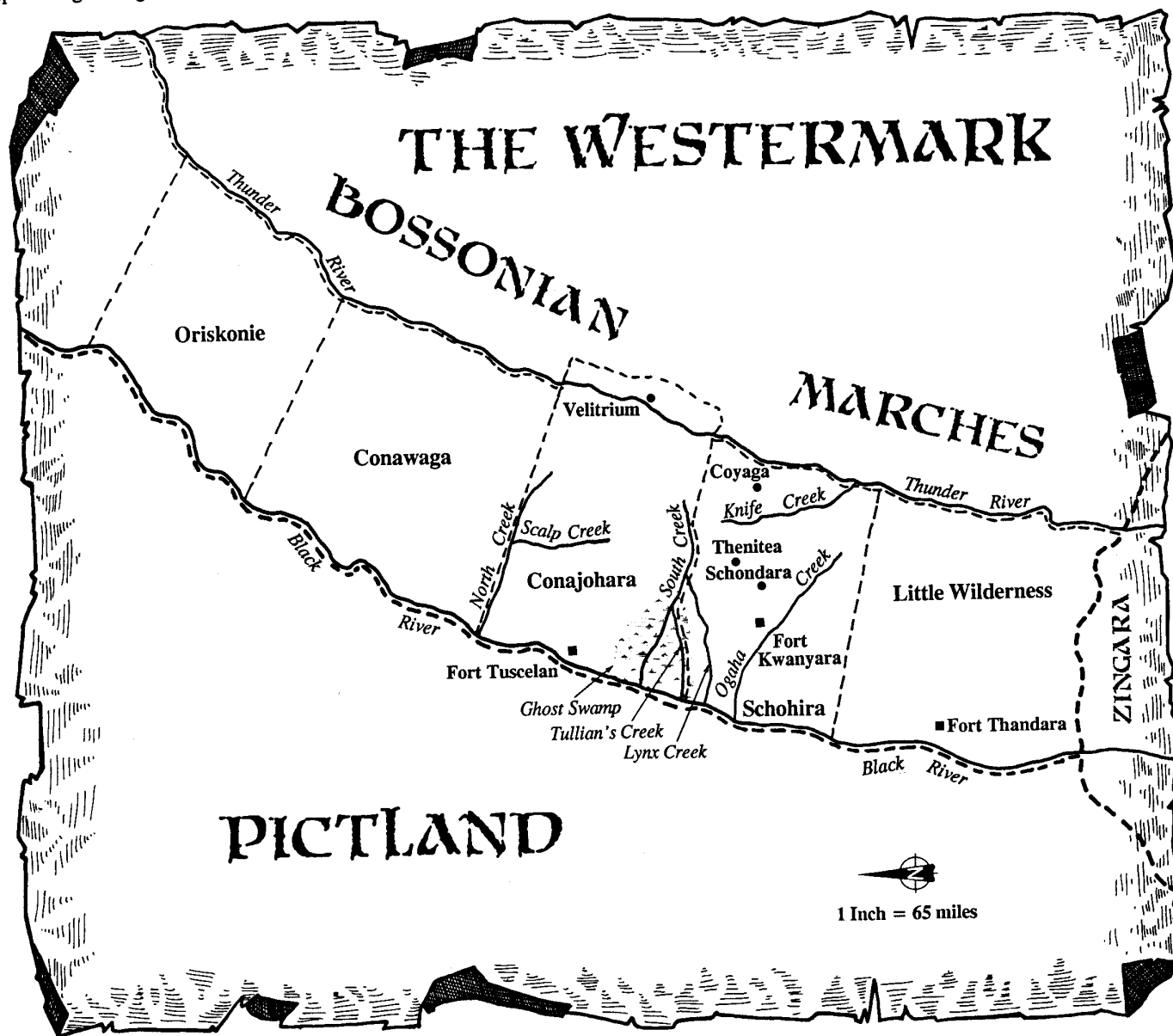
You are a captain of archers in the Frontier Guard of Aquilonia, part of an undermanned army on a most volatile border. Your headquarters is Velitrium, the capital of Conajohara, and likely the next target of the Picts should they renew their assault. Neglected by the king, and undermined by frontier politics, can you hold the frontier?

If you are playing *Moon of Blood* as a continuation of *Beyond Thunder River* (another Conan solo adventure), please read *Continuing Beyond Thunder River* (on p. 26 of the appendix) before proceeding.

If you are Conan, your character sheet is provided on p. 32.

If you want to design your own character, see *Designing Heroes* on p. 25 of the appendix.

When you are ready, turn to 1.



**1** It's been two months since the fall of Fort Tuscelan, and three weeks from the end of the savage fighting which thrust the savages back from the walls of Velitrium. Except for skirmishes, the frontier has been quiet since then. Are the Picts done with their war, or are they massing for further assaults?

You've been given the job of finding the answer. In co-command of a combined company of pikemen and archers, you are leading a reconnaissance in force. Yesterday, the soldiers marched south from Velitrium down Thunder Valley, as if heading for Schondara, the capital of the next province. Once clear of watchful Pict eyes, you swung the column west into the wilderness and camped last night in the uninhabited northeast woods of Schohira province. Since this morning, you've been pushing farther west along a winding Pict trail, angling north and west toward South Creek and Conajohara, the conquered territory.

Along with your lieutenant, a young Aquilonian named Flavius, you now leave the column to scout ahead. As you do so, you and the lad talk — it's your way of seeing to the training of your second-in-command. Flavius is a well-built, blond youth of medium height. Starting at every sound and swatting at myriad flies, he seems clumsy and nervous.

Make a Strategy roll, at +2. (Strategy defaults to IQ-4 or Tactics-4.) If you do not have Area Knowledge (Westermarck), give yourself a further -4 penalty to the roll.

If you succeed, turn to 135.

If you fail, turn to 50.

**2** Lashing out with your booted foot, you kick the lid back on its creaking hinges. The sentries blink and Lucian flinches as golden coins glitter in the sunlight.

"The time for lies is past, viscount," you say grimly, your eyes boring into those of your superior. "Your crime is foul treachery — betraying your own soldiers into a death trap, who fought for you valiantly and trusted you blindly!"

Roll a Quick Contest of IQs, yours against Lucian's (15).

If you win, turn to 98.

If not, turn to 136.

**3** Naked but for breechclouts, moccasins and the feathers in their tangled manes of knotted hair, the Picts charge your troops, shooting arrows as they come. Several fall before the withering rain of Bossonian arrows.

Consult Force Roster A on p. 30 of the appendix, and compare the *Missile Bonus* totals for each side. Then turn to 137.

**4** Resolve this portion of the battle by trying a Battle Contest, pitting your Strategy against that of the Pict war chief.

The Picts have little mastery of the art of war. Their war chief's Strategy score is 1d+3.

Apply any bonuses to this Battle Contest which you have been previously directed to use. In addition, if you have the *Plot Word* AVENGER, give yourself an additional +4 bonus; the *Plot Word* INVINCIBLE is worth an extra +2 bonus.

Note the result, and turn to 23.

**5** As you stare up into the foliage above you, the greenery is blocked out by a bulky, misshapen figure. The thing is on the soldier next to you with frightful speed, choking and strangling him. Thrust almost against your face is a frightful visage, with a pair of flaming red eyes and a peaked head. Your nostrils are filled with a bestial reek.

Up and down the line, similar scenes are repeated. "Swords!" you order. "Kill the ape-things! Keep your ranks, but kill them!"

Turn to 72.

**6** Fear threatens to engulf you — a fear by which the supernatural often gain the advantage over mortal beings. While you have always believed that any being clothed in material flesh can be slain by material weapons, however grisly its form might be, the deeper, primitive recesses of your soul rebel against the logic and reasoning of your mind.

Make a Will roll.

If you succeed, turn to 102.

If you fail, turn to 140.

**7** "Tis plain enough," you explain. "Someone has betrayed Schohira province to the savages, and I suspect that the ambush today was part of their plans. The only question is the identity of the traitor."

"Surely, none of the officers . . ." begins Flavius.

"It could hardly be anyone else," you growl. "Arno must be innocent, for he would hardly have put himself into that death trap. That only leaves three candidates: Captain Glyco of the other Gunderman company, Captain Laodamas of the horse, or General Viscount Lucian himself."

If you have the *Plot Word* CHAMPION, turn to 103.

Otherwise, turn to 190.

**8** There is no let-up in the rhythmic pounding coming from the shaman's cabin.

Turn to 55.

**9** There is nothing more to be done for the Westermarck. Laodamas goes to Lucian with the news of your suspicions.

Turn to 143.



**10** "Come on, my friends," you roar. "By squads, advance!"

The trumpeter winds his horn. The Aquilonian horsemen, chafing after the long delay, spur their mounts with a clatter of armor and a creaking of harness. The squads of mailed horsemen plough through the loose knots of Picts like an armored thunderbolt.

Due to this charge, you receive a +3 bonus on all future Battle Contests. Make a note of this.

If your *Plot Word* is REBEL, turn to 144.

If not, turn to 57.

**11** Begin the combat. General Lucian's goal is to escape, and he is running for his horse. In order to escape, Lucian must be adjacent to his animal, succeed at a Riding roll to mount successfully (his score is 17), and then ride out of range of your attacks.

If Lucian is killed, incapacitated or captured, turn to 194.

If Lucian is captured alive, turn to 60.

If Lucian escapes, turn to 145.

If you are killed, *your adventure is over.*

If you are incapacitated, continue the fight with your allied characters. If they are killed, incapacitated or flee, turn to 143.

If you flee this battle, turn to 143.

**12** "He's no worse than most noble officers," you reply. "He has soft hands, and he lets his servants wait on him overmuch, I think. However, his mind seems quick enough, and when it comes to fighting, it's us on the sharp end, not him. I suppose he's all right."

Turn to 146.

**13** "The savages have a traditional reluctance to fight after nightfall," you instruct your former lieutenant. "It would take a stronger war chief than Zogar Sag to break that tradition. That's why they've retreated, before full darkness engulfs the battle."

If you have the *Plot Word* WARLORD, turn to 62.

If not, turn to 196.

**14** Make a Will roll for any officer with an effective HT of 1-3, to see if he remains effective in this battle. If he fails the roll, he is of no further use in this engagement and is "out of action." If he succeeds, he continues at no penalty.

An officer with a HT of 0 or less is automatically out of action.

When an officer is removed from battle, a lower officer from the Force Roster (if there are any) must be promoted to take his place. Promote the eligible character with the highest rank and Tactics skill. Captains replace generals; lieutenants replace captains; sergeant-majors replace lieutenants; sergeants replace sergeant-majors. There are no replacements for sergeants.

If your *Plot Word* is RENEGADE, turn to 106.

If not, turn to 148.

**15** Your enemy is a *chaken* — see p. 29 of the appendix for a full description. His preferred method of fighting is get into Close Combat with his victims, grabbing his foe's weapon arm to make him drop his weapon, then choking or strangling his disarmed prey.

Turn to 64.

**16** "I think not," you laugh. "We'll conceal ourselves in this thicket, and in the darkness of the evening go unremarked."

Leading Flavius to the densest portion of the woods, you and he crouch down in the underbrush.

Turn to 150.

**17** Something moves on the floor of the cabin. You feel a sharp sting on your left arm, below the short sleeve of your mail shirt. A huge viper has its fangs imbedded in your forearm.

With a gasp of revulsion, you strike with your weapon. The serpent's severed body squirms and coils on the earthen floor, scattering the coals of the fire. The smell of roasting flesh fills

the confined space. Two red spots appear where the fangs entered your flesh, and a fierce pain spreads to your shoulder.

Turn to 66.

**18** You snort. "Believe as you like, captain, but Flavius and I both heard it. Viscount Lucian is a traitor to Aquilonia."

"But Lucian is *noble*," persists Laodamas.

Turn to 199.

**19** Suddenly, a scream pierces the night. A sudden attack strikes your left flank — an assault, not by men, but by the ape-men of the jungle, the *chaken*. Zogar Sag's sorcery has come to the Picts' aid.

Apply a +3 bonus to the Picts' future Battle Contest rolls.

Turn to 202.

**20** "I guess I'll have to use some Pictish persuasion," you mutter, setting to work with the heated blade. Laodamas, disgusted, leaves the room. Flavius watches, white as a sheet. Only Glyco seems unmoved.

Roll a Quick Contest of your Interrogation skill (defaults to IQ-5) against Edric's Will (12). The torture gives you a +6 bonus to your roll.

If you win the contest, turn to 201.

Otherwise, he does not break, and is no longer in any position to answer questions. Turn to 172.

**21** At last, Arno gives in to your demand for speed, ordering his pikemen to maintain the pace. However, there's ill feelings between you, and the men can sense it.

Your *Plot Word* is WARRIOR.

Turn to 155.

**22** "By Mitral!" you swear. "This is no field of tournament, but a frontier war — and I know more about blood and blades than you may ever know, lad!"

"Aye, sir," says Laodamas glumly.

Turn to 156.

**23** Using the table below, find the result of the Battle Contest, and reduce the Troop Strength and Missile Bonus *totals* of the appropriate sides by the following percentages.

Battle Contest Result	Aquilonian losses* Pict losses	
If you win by 17+ points	none/none	(11d+55)%
If you win by 13-16 points	none/none	(10d+50)%
If you win by 8-12 points	none/(1d)%	(7d+35)%
If you win by 4-7 points	(1d)%/(2d)%	(5d+25)%
If neither commander wins		
by more than 3 points	(2d+2)%/(4d)%	(4d+10)%
If the Picts win by 4-7 points	(4d+5)%/(4d+15)%	(3d)%
If the Picts win by 8-12 points	(4d+15)%/(5d+25)%	(2d)%
If the Picts win by 13-16 points	(4d+20)%/(7d+35)%	(1d)%
If the Picts win by 17+ points	(7d+35)%/(10d+50)%	none

\* Use the first, lower number only if you have the *Plot Word* UNCONQUERABLE but don't have the *Plot Word* BARBARIAN, or if you have the *Plot Word* AVENGER.

If you have the *Plot Word* RENEGADE, turn immediately to 115.

If you lost the Battle Contest by 8 or more points, turn to 206.

If you lost the Battle Contest by 4 to 7 points, turn to 72.  
If you won the battle by 2 or more points, turn to 34.  
In all other cases, turn to 157.

**24** The Picts, impatient of any delay, resume their assault.

Your *Plot Word* is RENEGADE.

If your *Plot Word* is INDESTRUCTIBLE, turn immediately to 158.

Otherwise, turn to 57.

**25** Two figures, distinct from the throng of nearly naked savages, step into the clearing. One is a shaman, wearing a harness in which is set a score of tinted ostrich feathers. The other man wears buckskin, and is an Aquilonian.

"Zogar Sag," you whisper, identifying the shaman. "And by Crom! That's Edric, the scout Lucian foisted on us!"

Cutting a path through the squatting warriors, the two arrivals climb the smaller of the Council Rocks. Edric begins to speak, with Zogar Sag translating for his people.

Turn to 74.

**26** Clearly, there is no escape from this battle. Return to 64.



**27** Muffled in cloaks against the chill and talking in low tones, you and the other three officers stand about a narrow pier that juts out from the Velitrium waterfront. Several small boats, tied to the pier, bob gently on the sinuous tide of the river. The moon, now revealed from behind the clouds that sheltered it earlier, hangs as a misshapen disk of luminous silver in the west. From the surface of the river a ghostly mist rises.

As you pace, a noise carries itself across the waters. "Oars," you whisper. "Take your places."

As the four of you retreat to the base of the pier and take cover, a black shape takes form out of the mist and resolves itself

into a rowboat. As it comes closer, the heads of five men can be discerned. When the boat pulls up to the pier's end, a man leaps out and makes the painter fast to a cleat.

If you have the *Plot Word* CONQUEROR, turn to 161.

Otherwise, turn to 210.

**28** Suddenly you feel the fiery pain spread to your chest. Gasping, gnashing your teeth, you sprawl to the floor and lie side by side with the dead shaman. After a massive convulsion, you cease to move.

Turn to 56.

**29** "Two score straggled back ere nightfall," said Glyco. "Captain Arno wasn't one of them, so I suppose he's dead with them."

You angrily smite your palm with a clenched fist.

Turn to 78.

**30** The battle has turned into a rout. The lines of painted, howling savages disintegrate into fleeing forms, glimpsed through the shafts of moonlight among the distant trees.

At night in dense forest, you know that cavalry is useless for pursuit. "Press on, Glyco!" you shout. "Give them no chance to rally!"

The captain of pikemen waves acknowledgement, as he and his men charge into the woods after the fleeing Picts.

Make a HT roll (use your effective HT). If you have the *Plot Word* VICTIM, there is a -3 penalty to this roll.

If you succeed, turn to 211.

If you fail, and you have the *Plot Word* VICTIM, turn to 164.

If you fail, but you do not have this *Plot Word*, turn to 77.

**31** "This has been an unmitigated disaster," complains Laodamas, riding back to his column of cavalry.

The Picts have not cooperated with your plans at all. You have had to march, and then march again, to place yourself across their line of advance . . . and the terrain you finally decide to make your stand on is not entirely to your liking.

Apply a -1 penalty to all Morale rolls in the coming battle. Turn to 165.

**32** Roll one die.

If the result is an even number, turn to 213.

Otherwise, turn to 166 instead.

**33** Roll one die.

On a roll of 1 to 4, your *Plot Word* is DAUNTLESS — turn to 167.

On a roll of 5 or 6, your *Plot Word* is INTREPID — turn to 207.

**34** The screech of a bone whistle cuts through the roar of battle. Pict chiefs run among the blood-crazed savages, pulling them back. Limping or hobbling down the forest trails, your enemies fade into the budding branches and are gone.

If you have the *Plot Word* BARBARIAN, turn to 185.

If not, turn to 168.

**35** You strike. The guard falls, twitching, his head split open like a rotten melon. Even as he topples, however, you hear someone coming up behind you. And there's something wrong with the shape of the skull you split . . .

Turn to 169.

**36** “The time comes for the reckoning. In return for aiding you to regain your stolen lands, Viscount Lucian now asks payment of the promised treasure.”

Turn to 83.

**37** Shaking the blood and sweat from your eyes, you wheel and run staggering through the woods, heading back to your battle lines.

Turn to 171.

**38** If you have a prisoner, turn to 58.  
If you don't, turn to 172.

**39** You break the seal, unroll the scroll, and peer at the writing thereon. “Bring that candle nearer, Sura,” you say. “This light is poor for reading.”

Turn to 88.

**40** You are left waiting in the courtyard for a considerable time, until you begin to worry that the viscount might have taken the opportunity to escape. Finally, you order the remaining sentry to fetch Lucian, and emphasize your determination with an unsheathed sword blade against his quivering throat.

Turn to 174.

**41** Arno too shouts orders, and the snakelike column of men dissolves into a shapeless mass. If all goes well, the men will reorganize themselves into combat formation, according to maneuvers which you have drilled into them . . . if you have trained them properly.

Make a Tactics roll, to see how effectively you have trained these soldiers. (This roll defaults to Strategy-6 or IQ-6).

If you succeed, the soldiers shake themselves out into a hollow square — turn to 175.

If you fail, turn to 90.

**42** You hold the center of the Aquilonian battle line, towering above the stockier Gundermen and Aquilonians. The savages come at you like yelping hounds seeking to drag down a boar, but you reap a gory harvest of the foe.

Make a Survival roll for each general and captain in your force, including any character replacing an officer who has fallen. Turn to Force Roster B on p. 31 for a list of officers and their Battle scores.

For further instructions, turn to 186.

**43** Roll one die.  
On a roll of 1 or 2, your *Plot Word* is MIGHTY — turn to 5.

On a roll of 3 or 4, your *Plot Word* is STRONG — turn to 177.

On a roll of 5 or 6, your *Plot Word* is TRIUMPHANT — turn to 92.

**44** “Who the devil is your brother?” you demand. You quietly ready your weapon for combat.

“A woman of the Hawks slept in a grove holy to Jhebbel Sag,” the creature says. “Her babe was Zogar Sag. I too am a son of Jhebbel Sag. With incantations and sorcery and his own blood, Zogar Sag summoned me. We are one, tied together by invisible threads. His thoughts are my thoughts. If he is struck, I am bruised. If I am cut, he bleeds.

“But I have talked enough. You are a dead man already.

Your body will be eaten by the black-winged, sharp-tongued Children of Jhil. Soon your ghost will talk with the ghosts of the Dark Land, and they will tell you of the old gods who are not dead, but sleep in the outer abysses, and from time to time awake.”

If your *Plot Word* is TRIUMPHANT, turn to 178.

If not, turn to 6.

**45** The savages ring you round, and sheer weight of numbers denies you the escape you seek. Zogar Sag tortures you over the black altar of Gullah, and the braves drink your blood before embarking on the conquest of Schohira.

*Your adventure is over.*

**46** Use Combat Map A. You are at CC. The creature you are facing is at P.

Turn to 180.

**47** “Captain, I know that I’m not the traitor,” says old Glyco, rubbing the scar on his cheek, “and I don’t believe that Laodamas is, either. That leaves only Lucian. I know him not, except since he came to command us, but I have no love for him.”

“Glyco!” says Laodamas, jumping to his feet. You ignore him.

Turn to 134.

**48** The officer is tossed out of his saddle, to fall with a crash of armor into the soft soil on the far side of his horse.

An instant later, you swing into the empty saddle.

Turn to 10.

**49** You are half blinded by the scalding, soapy water. Until you succeed at a HT roll (at -8), you have a -7 penalty to DX and DX-related skills. You may attempt the roll at the conclusion of each combat round.

Turn to 183.

**50** “One of our soldiers, properly outfitted and trained, is equal to ten of the savages,” you remind Flavius, when he expresses his doubts about this expedition. “When we march in company strength, we are virtually impregnable to anything the Picts can throw at us.”

Flavius looks puzzled. “But we have no force to back us up, and the Picts . . . they can field thousands of warriors! Um, sir.”

You shake your head. “We’ll be in and out of Conajohara before they know what hit them, and then we’ll know what they’re up to.”

Your lieutenant slaps at the mosquitoes. “Likely as not, Zogar Sag has taken his revenge and is content to send his warriors home. When we strike, they won’t know what hit them.”

Turn to 184.

**51** The fighting has only ebbed for a moment, it is but a lull in the battle, much like the eye of a storm.

“Captain,” says Flavius, “we are sore beset!”

You shake your head. “This is but a skirmish, to test our resolve as before. When they see that we stand, they will withdraw.”

The drums begin to beat again, and another wave of savages surges across the field.

Consult Force Roster B on p. 31 of the appendix then turn to 195.





**52** Now the Picts are upon you. Some, in their warlike fury, impale themselves on the points of the Gundermen pikes. Others dance beyond the reach of those weapons, yelling war cries and brandishing hatchets. A few drop to the ground and try to roll beneath the jagged line of pike points.

You wield your weapon, lopping off a head here, an arm there, defending the ground upon which you stand.

Make a Survival roll for each captain and lieutenant in your force, including yourself, and any character replacing a captain or lieutenant who has fallen. Turn to Force Roster A on p. 30 of the appendix for a list of officers and their Battle scores.

For further instructions, turn to 186.

**53** The sharp talons slice through tendon and sinew, separating your head from your body. The grisly trophy is placed atop Zogar Sag's blackened altar, where your sightless eyes can look no more on the Pict triumph in the Westernmarck.

*Your adventure is over.*

**54** Pictish sorcery fails before the resolution of your brave soldiers, inspired by the example of officers like yourself. With weapons flowing red once more with blood, your troops continue their march back to the east, without any sign of Picts in pursuit.

"I'll not breathe easy till we cross the far side of South Creek and see Schohira again," says Captain Arno. "We need someone to scout for us, to tell us what the forest devils are up to. Lucian's men are obviously worthless — you're the only one who can do this."

You nod. Your duty is obvious.

"It may well be a mission of suicide . . ." says Arno, but you interrupt him with a laugh.

"Worry not for me, friend," you say. "Too many Picts have died by my blade for me to fear them overmuch."

Taking Flavius, you disappear into the woods.

Your *Plot Word* is INVINCIBLE.

Turn to 188.

**55** You lift the door flap and step in, your nostrils quivering from the strange scents. The dim red glow from the coals of a small fire at the center of the cabin provides the only illumination. Beyond the fire, vaguely visible in the roseate darkness, sits a hunched figure.

If you have the *Plot Words* FREEBOOTER or DAUNTLESS, turn to 189.

Otherwise, turn to 66.

**56** The savages take your scalp, considering the gory trophy a charm that will ensure them victory in battle. *Your adventure is over.*

**57** In a single broad front, your troops advance against the oncoming Picts. The face of the moon, reflected in brackish ponds, is red with the blood of the dead and dying.

Consult Force Roster B, on p. 31 of the appendix. If your *Plot Word* is INVINCIBLE, add the surviving totals from Force Roster A to your score. Unless you have the *Plot Word* CIMMERIA, also add to your totals the factors representing Laodamas' cavalry.

When you are ready, turn to 195.

**58** "Flavius, take this dog's knife away and bind his hands behind his back," you order. "The rest of us will carry this chest along. Right, Laodamas?"

"By the gods," mutters the Aquilonian officer. "I'm not a common laborer . . ."

As dawn's first light strikes Velitrium, your party returns to the barracks and to the officers' quarters. The sentries stare but, recognizing you, salute without comment.

You inspect the prisoner. "This one is Edric," you growl, "the one who led us into yesterday's trap. You'll tell us what we want to know, eh, Edric?"

The scout keeps silent.

If you decide to *persuade* him to speak, turn to 154.

If you threaten him, turn to 192.

If you try physical coercion, turn to 67.

If you give up on him, turn to 172.

**59** "Very well," growls Arno, returning to his men. "We'll match your pace."

"Arno has a thick head," you mutter to Flavius, "but he has the good sense to realize that two commanders will ruin this expedition, and he knows that I'm the better man."

Your *Plot Word* is FEARLESS.

Turn to 155.

**60** "Take him to the stockades," you order Flavius. "Numedides should be pleased to have such a high ranking prisoner for the Iron Tower!"

Your *Plot Word* is ADVENTURER.

Turn to 194.

**61** "Mitra," breathes Flavius. "There must be thousands of them."

Formidable they are, these swarthy, muscular men armed with copper-bladed hatchets and copper-headed spears. Some



bear weapons of fine Aquilonian steel, stolen from the dead after the fall of Fort Tuscelan.

Consult Force Roster A, on p. 30 of the appendix, and compare the Troop Strength (TS) totals for each side. Do not include any Missile Bonus. Then turn to 195.

**62** “Hark!” you say. From the deep woods comes the distant sound of a drum and a rattle, pounded in the same rhythm as that which preceded the magical assault of the first battle.

“Magic does not terrify me,” says Captain Glyco, approaching with Laodamas to make a tactical report. “But I’ll not vouch for my pikemen. All the troops know about the Pictish magic from yesterday’s survivors.”

Turn to 109.

**63** Shuddering, you pinch the writhing swamp sucker and cast it from you.

Your *Plot Word* is CONQUEROR. Turn to 217.

**64** Begin the combat. If you come in physical contact with the creature, and if you have the *Plot Word* TRIUMPHANT, turn to 198.

If the creature is killed, turn to 73 (if your *Plot Word* is MIGHTY) or to 160 (if you don’t have this *Plot Word*).

If you are killed, *your adventure is over*.

If you are knocked unconscious, turn to 53.

If you decide to flee this battle, turn to 111.

**65** “I suspect Lucian,” you say boldly. “Otherwise, I’d not have revealed my knowledge to you. On the other hand, I’m not certain that either of you are innocent — that’s why I’m keeping the four of us together, until we know for sure.”

“Why, that’s *incredible*,” says Laodamas, waving a hand in the air for emphasis. “I outrank you on the promotion list, and I have noble blood . . .”

Turn to 199.

**66** The seated figure stirs. “Captain!” *He knows who you are*. The word sounds like the hiss of a monstrous snake. Zogar Sag rises and points an arm at you.

Use Combat Map D. You are at C. Zogar Sag is at Z. Stats for Zogar Sag are provided on p. 28 of the appendix.

Begin the combat.

If Zogar Sag is killed or knocked unconscious, you take your vengeance — turn to 200.

If you are killed, *your adventure is over*.

If you are knocked unconscious, turn to 56.

If you flee this battle, turn to 75.

**67** “Talk, or I’ll beat the truth out of you,” you bellow, towering over the bound prisoner.

Laodamas makes for the door. “How barbaric,” he mutters, exiting.

Roll a Quick Contest of your ST, Brawling skill or Streetwise skill (your choice) against Edric’s Will (12).

If you win, turn to 201.

If you lose, he doesn’t talk — return to 58 and choose a new option.

**68** An agonized cry reaches your ear, followed by a chorus of similar voices. Looking down, you see that the forest floor seethes with snakes — some longer than you are tall, and others marked with the jeweled patterns denoting the most poisonous of serpents.

“Stand fast, and slay the damned serpents!” you cry, slicing the nearest slithering predator into writhing halves.

Make a Fright Check. Record the results, if any, on your character sheet. Apply a +4 bonus to the Picts’ future Battle Contest rolls.

Turn to 202.

**69** “I’ve selected from among our most trusted men those with forest experience,” you report, “and I’m sending them out as scouts. When they report back, we’ll move to meet the savages at their most vulnerable point — as they make the crossing over South Creek.”

“But Zogar Sag . . .” says Laodamas.

“The devil take Zogar Sag! Whoever told you that soldiering was a safe trade?” you growl.

You are convinced that your plan is sound, but it also requires precise timing. As the runners bring back the scouts’ reports, you do your best to interpret them correctly, and plan your march.

Make a second Strategy roll, to use your scouting information correctly.

If you succeed, your *Plot Word* is AVENGER — turn to 118.

If you fail, turn to 31.

**70** There is something unsavory about this scout. After he vanishes back into the woods, you have Flavius detail a handful of your archers and send them ahead as scouts.

Your *Plot Word* is VICTORIOUS.

Turn to 204.

**71** “I’m going after that witch,” you growl. “You have your orders. Captain Glyco is in command until my return.”

“But, general . . .”

“Seek not to dissuade me, man!” you reply. “I’ve got to discover the lair of this hyena.”

Skirting the battle line, you jog down the trail until you are well clear of the combatants. When it wanders near a creek, you

ford it and emerge on the far side. Pushing through heavy overgrowth, you reach the open aisles of the virgin forest beyond.

The moon, grown to a great silver disk, rides high in the sky. Guiding your steps by her light, you follow a circular course calculated to bring you around behind the Pictish mass. You walk softly, pausing from time to time to listen and to taste the air.

Make a Tracking roll (at -2, due to the darkness), to see if you can locate Zogar Sag's war-cabin. (The roll defaults to IQ-7 or Naturalist-7.)

If you succeed, turn to 120.

If you fail, turn to 205.

**72** An archer, shrieking in mindless terror, drops his bow and breaks into a run. Panic threatens to engulf your hard-pressed Aquilonian troops.

Make a Morale roll for each unit in your force. (If you do not know what a Morale roll is, see p. 26). There may be bonuses or penalties to these rolls, depending on the *Plot Words* you possess:

<i>Condition</i>	<i>Result</i>
You have the <i>Plot Word</i> INVINCIBLE	+2 bonus
You have the <i>Plot Word</i> UNCONQUERABLE	+1 bonus
You have the <i>Plot Word</i> BARBARIAN, but do not have WARLORD or INVINCIBLE	-2 penalty
You have the <i>Plot Words</i> BARBARIAN and WARLORD	-1 penalty

Scores are listed on Force Roster A, on p. 30. Place a check mark in the Demoralization box of every unit which fails its roll.

If any units fail their roll, turn to 119.

Otherwise, turn to 54 (if you have the *Plot Word* WARLORD) or to 157 (if you do not have that *Plot Word*).

**73** You press onward, determined more than ever to find the shaman and see him thrust down to hell.

Turn to 207.

**74** Make a Hearing roll.

If you succeed, but do not have the *Plot Word* INVINCIBLE, turn to 208.

If you succeed and have the *Plot Word* INVINCIBLE, turn to 121.

If you fail, turn to 170.

**75** As you run from the cabin, Zogar Sag sends a weird, inhuman call shuddering out into the night. Somewhere, far out in the black forest, a deeper cry answers. From the timbre of the cry, you know it could never come from a human throat.

From the shadows of the trees, a great bulk steps forward to block your way — a bull ape, one of the giants from the deepest forests of Pictland.

Use Combat Map A. You are at C. A Pictish ape is at A. Stats for the ape are provided on p. 29 of the appendix.

Begin the combat.

If the ape is killed or knocked unconscious, turn to 37.

If you are killed, *your adventure is over*.

If you are knocked unconscious, turn to 53.

If you flee this battle, turn to 209.

**76** Without a cry, the man dives at you. A knife blade gleams in the moonlight.

Use Combat Map B. Both you and the attacking stranger

(Edric of Oriskonie) are at C, in Close Combat. Flavius is at F, Laodamas is at L, and Glyco is at G — they are crouching. Four Oriskonian Scouts are at positions S1 through S4, and the chest is at X.

Begin the battle. Night vision rules are in effect. Everyone except Edric is stunned, and cannot take any action other than to defend themselves until they succeed at a Will roll. The roll may be attempted at the end of every combat round.

If you are killed, *your adventure is over*.

If you and the other officers flee the battle, turn to 172.

If two of the strangers have been captured or killed, make a note of this paragraph's number, and then turn to 123.

If all of the strangers are dead, captured, or have fled the battle, turn to 38.

**77** You spur your mount, to overtake the head of Glyco's column. Then the world dissolves in whirling blackness. You have pressed yourself too far — beyond the limits of your fading vigor.

When you awaken, you are in the care of Old Sura, the army physician, back in the barracks at Velitrium.

Turn to 126.

**78** "Glyco and Laodamas, go to your units and select a dozen men you can trust," you order. "Tell them it's a perilous action against treachery in high places, and if they want revenge for South Creek, they must follow orders."

Half an hour later, you rendezvous with the officers and their soldiers on the drill ground. You select four men and order them to carry the heavy pay chest, then order all of the soldiers to follow you.

The sun has mounted the tops of the rolling Bossonian hills when you arrive at the spacious villa reserved for the governor of Conajohara. Built on a slope, the house fronts a high terrace, reached by a dozen steps from street level. A groom stands in the muddy street, holding the reins of a mighty charger.

As you approach, two sentries snap to attention. "Fetch the general," you command.

Roll a Quick Contest of ST, modified by rank. Your rank is 4; the sentry has a ST of 14, and his rank is 0.

If you win by 7 or more points, turn to 174.

If you lose, turn to 212.

In any other case, turn to 125.

**79** "Form square for attack!" you roar. "Archers, hold your fire until you see your targets plain."

"But captain," says Flavius, "it was only the hoot of an owl. There is no . . ."

"Whoever heard an owl at midday?" you snarl. A chorus of yells from the trees ahead half drowns your words.

Turn to 41.

**80** "Laodamas!" You stroll up to the waiting cavalry. "Hold your horse soldiers out of the initial battle. I'm holding you in reserve, until the savages are disorganized and ripe for the plucking."

"That would be taking unfair advantage," protests the noble-born officer.

"Crom and Mitra, this is no tournament!" you reply. "You have your orders."

Your *Plot Word* is INDESTRUCTIBLE.

Turn to 214.

**81** "That'll mean sorcery," you grimly call to your co-commander. "The racket no doubt means that our old friend Zogar Sag will be directing the next attack."

The other captain's face reddens with fury. "Watch your tongue!" The soldiers exchange worried looks.

You shrug. "Anyone who wars with the Picts, fights sorcery. It's the natural condition of the frontier."

Apply a -2 penalty to your soldiers' next Morale check.  
Turn to 130.

**82** You half crouch, the flesh prickling along your spine. It isn't Flavius who emerges from the other side of the glade. A weird glow burns through the trees. It moves toward you, shimmering strangely — a green witch-fire that moves with purpose and intent.

It halts some feet away and you glare at it, trying to distinguish its fire-misted outlines. The quivering flame has a solid core — the flame is but a green garment that masks some animate and evil entity, but you are unable to make out its shape or likeness.

Turn to 129.

**83** Four Picts appear in the clearing, staggering under a stout chest slung from a pole. Zogar Sag raises the lid, lifts up a fistful of gleaming coins, and lets them trickle back down into the chest. It's the pay chest lost when Fort Tuscelan fell.

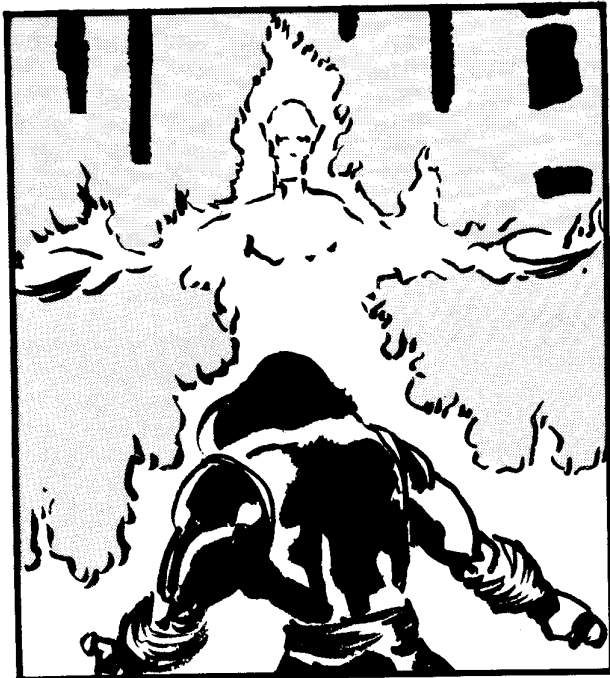
"This news is vital," you tell your companion. "We've got to reach Velitrium and tell our tale. We go."

Roll a Quick Contest to escape this place undetected, pitting your Stealth against the Hearing of the Picts (16). If you have the *Plot Word* DEFIANT, give yourself a +4 bonus.

If you lose the Contest, take the *Plot Word* CONQUEROR and turn to 217.

Otherwise, turn to 179.

**84** A weird glow moves toward you, shimmering strangely — a green witch-fire that moves with purpose and intent. You glare at it, trying to distinguish its fire-misted outlines. The quivering flame has a solid core — the flame is but a green garment that masks some animate and evil entity — but you are unable to make out its shape or likeness.



Make a Fright Check. Record the results, if any, on your character sheet.

It is a swamp devil. Stats for it are given on p. 29 of the appendix. Its preferred tactic is to slash with its powerful talons, while keeping the maximum distance between you and it.

Turn to 46.

**85** If you have both the *Plot Words* DESTROYER and CHAMPION, turn to 47.

In any other case, turn to 219.

**86** "Laodamas!" you yell. Sitting his horse, the cavalry commander turns in his saddle . . . and seeing you, turns pale.

"Mitra save us!" he gasps. "Is it you?"

"Are you expecting someone else?" you growl. Eyeing the field, you see exactly what you expected: the resumed assault by the savages is uncoordinated, with knots of braves scattered all across the meadow. "'Tis the moment. Launch your charge!"

If your *Plot Word* is MERCENARY, turn to 220.

Otherwise, turn to 10.

**87** "The pay chest from Fort Tuscelan!" says Lucian, recognizing the wine-red leather of which the chest is fashioned, and the gilt-tipped design of dragons incised upon it. "Guards! Arrest these men!"

"But, milord . . ." begins Laodamas.

"Seize me these traitors!" bellows General Lucian.

Use Combat Map C. You are at C, and the viscount is at V. Your confederates, Glyco, Laodamas and Flavius, are at G, L and F. The sentries are at S1-S3. There is a horse at H. A groom is at Gr, and a Barber at Bb. Laodamas' cavalymen are at C1-C6; Glyco's pikemen are at T1-T6.

Glyco, Laodamas and the sentries are surprised, and cannot take any action except defense until they succeed at an IQ roll. The roll may be attempted once at the end of each combat round. Your soldiers are afraid to take action, and stand motionless in the road.

Stats are provided on pp. 28-29 of the appendix. Both the sentries and Glyco's soldiers use "Gundermen Pikemen" stats; Laodamas' men are "Aquilonian Cavalymen." The Groom and Barber are both HT 8, and flee this battle as quickly as possible.

Begin the combat.

If Lucian is killed, incapacitated or captured, turn to 194.

If a sentry is killed or incapacitated, turn to 183.

If you are killed, *your adventure is over*.

If you are incapacitated, continue the fight with your allied characters. If they are killed, incapacitated or flee, turn to 143.

If you flee this battle, turn to 143.

**88** King Numedides has confirmed your appointment as a general in the Frontier Guards. What's more, he bids you to the capital at Tarantia for an official investiture and a royal feast.

"After a year of dodging Picts through trackless forests and unmasking traitorous commanders, the fleshpots of Tarantia sound tempting," you exclaim.

"Have a care," warns old Glyco. "At court, they say there's a scorpion under every silken cushion."

"I'll take care, fear not," you reply. "But if Zogar Sag, for all his power, couldn't slay me, I think the hero of Westermarck will be in little peril at the court of Aquilonia's king!"

THE END

**89** "Where is that ninny Laodamas!" you bellow over the din of combat. "I need his horsemen — has he betrayed his king?"

Turn to 4.

**90** The men mill around, unable to form up before the savages are upon them.

Turn to 3.

**91** "I'd like to see what you look like," you mutter, "you who leave a track like a bird, who burn like a flame, and yet speak with a human voice."

"You shall see," answers the voice from the flame, "see, and carry the knowledge with you into the Dark Land."

The flames leap and sink, dwindling and dimming. A face begins to take shadowy form. At first you think that it is Zogar Sag himself who stands wrapped in green flame. But the face is higher than your own, and there is a demoniac aspect about it — an obliqueness about the eyes, a sharpness of the ears, a wolfish thinness of the lips. The eyes are red as coals of living fire.

More details come into view: a slender torso, covered with snaky scales, which is man-like in shape, with man-like arms, from the waist upward; below, long crane-like legs end in splay, three-toed feet like those of some huge bird. Along the monstrous limbs the blue fire flutters and runs.

Turn to 6.

**92** A great smoky mass descends on your men from above. As the cloud spreads, it takes on a lumpy appearance, as if solidifying into solid masses. The dark masses condense into living creatures — tall, thin beings with birdlike legs and lower parts, and half-human heads and upper torsos. Each has long, skinny arms ending in hands weaponed with huge, curved claws. As tall as a man, each demon is accompanied by a weird, flickering glow, as if the beings are bathed in the cold flames of marsh gas.

"Stand and fight!" you bellow to your men. "Any being of flesh and blood can be killed by steel!"

Make a Fright Check at -2. Record the results, if any, on your character sheet.

Turn to 72.

**93** You freeze, fearing that the sound of battle might have alerted Zogar Sag.

If your *Plot Word* is FREEBOOTER or DAUNTLESS, turn to 142.

Otherwise, turn to 8.

**94** "'Tis plain enough," you explain. "After Tuscelan fell, Lucian became governor of this rump province of Conajohara, consisting of little more than the riverland around Velitrium. The land won't keep its independence long, not with Brocas of Conawaga and Thasperas of Schohira after it."

"Aye," agrees Flavius.

"Lucian knows his governorship will end soon. He is said to be a gambler, and up to his jowls in debt. He hates Lord Thasperas, so he gains both fortune and revenge by selling out Schohira. That pay chest holds half a year's pay for nigh a thousand men."

Turn to 103.

**95** Laodamas applies his spurs, riding farther back into the forest. "The captain is mad!" he cries. "Ride, ride, to Velitrium and safety!"

His cavalry follows their captain, leaving you alone in the woods.

You have the *Plot Word* CIMMERIA.

If your *Plot Word* is REBEL, turn to 144.

If not, turn to 57.

**96** "This is Schohira's only hope," you explain, "and our final hope for saving the Westernmarck from the Picts. If you love your country more than your own skins, follow me."

Laodamas is the recalcitrant one. If you can sway him, both he and Glyco will do as you wish.

Roll a Quick Contest of your IQ, Fast-Talk skill, or Diplomacy skill (your choice) against Laodamas' IQ (12).

If you win, Laodamas is persuaded — turn to 116.

If you lose, turn to 9.

**97** Your face becomes a mask as, slit-eyed, you study your companion. "I've said nothing against him. But I've seen enough of this world to trust few men."

In truth, there is little love between you and the noble general. Like most of the feudal lordlings, he cares foremost for himself, and seems to have little regard for his men. As for the scouts he's hired . . . well, you wish you had the men you commanded before Fort Tuscelan fell to the primitives.

Your *Plot Word* is MAJESTIC.

Turn to 146.

**98** Use Combat Map C. You are at C. Your confederates, Glyco, Laodamas and Flavius, are at G, L and F. The sentries are at S1-S3. There is a horse at H. A groom is at Gr, and a Barber at Bb. Laodamas' cavalymen are at C1-C6; Glyco's pikemen are at T1-T6. If you have not already placed Lucian, he is at L.

Everyone except Lucian is surprised, and cannot take any action except defense until they succeed at an IQ roll. The roll may be attempted once at the end of each combat round.

Stats are provided on pp. 28-29 of the appendix. Both the sentries and Glyco's soldiers use "Gundermen Pikemen" stats; Laodamas' men are "Aquilonian Cavalrymen." The Groom and Barber are both HT 8, and flee this battle as quickly as possible.

When you are ready for further instructions, turn to 11.

**99** Make a Glory roll for the same characters who just tried Survival rolls. (Glory rolls are explained on pp. 25-26.) Be sure to note the results. Double all results — positive or negative — for yourself; if you don't have the *Plot Word* BARBARIAN, double Captain Arno's results as well.

When you are done, if any officer has an effective HT of 3 or less, turn to 14.

If not, turn to 176 (if your *Plot Word* is BARBARIAN) or to 61 (if you don't have that *Plot Word*).

**100** "When the savages find a plan that works, they often repeat it blindly," you explain. "Zogar Sag's earlier attack annihilated us, so he follows the same scheme now."

Flavius' eyes widen. "So if the pattern repeats, then the next assault will be . . ."

"Pictish sorcery," you finish for him.

Turn to 62.

**101** "I think not," you say. Above the clearing, the creek widens into a beaver pond. Leading your

companion there, you pull ferns and water plants from the margin and fasten them around your helmet.

"This hides our helms," says Flavius, "but what about the rest of us?"

You wade into the waist-deep water, taking shelter behind the bulk of the beaver house — a dry nest of twigs above the surface. "All is invisible in this brackish water," you explain.

The two of you crouch until the water reaches your chins, all but undetectable under the leafy disguises.

Your *Plot Word* is DEFIANT.

Turn to 150.

**102** Use Combat Map A. You are at C. The creature is at XX.

When you have the scene set up, turn to 15 (if your *Plot Word* is MIGHTY) or to 149 (if you don't have this *Plot Word*).

**103** You and your companion walk half the night to reach Velitrium, hoping to arrive long before the heavily laden Picts with their treasure chest can rendezvous with the traitors, and swim the mighty Thunder River with your remaining strength. Four of you are now convened in the officers' quarters at Velitrium Barracks: Captain Glyco of the pikemen, Captain Laodamas of the cavalry, yourself, and the slumberous Flavius.

Glyco is a heavy-set man with a grizzled beard and a battle-scarred face. Laodamas is younger, tall and handsome in a patrician sort of way, with wavy blond hair that hangs to his shoulder. Both are only partially dressed, since you woke them in the middle of the night.

"'Tis incredible, captain, what you tell us," Laodamas is replying to you. "I cannot believe it."

If you do not have the *Plot Word* DESTROYER, turn immediately to 18.

If you have both the *Plot Words* DESTROYER and CHAMPION, turn to 152.

In any other case, turn to 65.

**104** Then, looking more closely, you see that which makes you shudder as if a cold wind from hell blows through the cabin. The shaman is dead. Dried spittle rims the witch's mouth. Livid red marks stand out on the body — *exactly in the places where you wounded the strange creature you just met in the woods.*

Zogar Sag lived by magic and, somehow, he has died of magic.

Make a Fright Check at -4. Record the results, if any, on your character sheet.

Turn to 200.

**105** Edric spits, and the phlegm sizzles on the heated knife blade. "You're a damnable savage yourself," he says, angrily but coolly.

The threatening hasn't broken him.

If you torture him, turn to 20.

If not, return to 58 and choose a new option.

**106** Pikemen and archers spear and stab like avenging angels. Bows are abandoned, for in the darkness they are of little use.

If your *Plot Word* is REBEL, turn immediately to 202.

If your *Plot Word* is MIGHTY, turn to 19.

If your *Plot Word* is TRIUMPHANT, turn immediately to 153.

If all other cases, turn to 68.

**107** "And I stand above *you, young man*," barks Captain Glyco, breaking into your argument. "If you make an issue of command, I'll take the generalship. I say let him lead — he seems to know what he's about."

"If he does not," says Laodamas sulkily, "he'll get us all killed in the woods."

Your *Plot Word* is MERCENARY.

Turn to 156.

**108** The two of you argue, while the soldiers look on curiously.

If you decide to give in to Captain Arno, turn to 193.

Otherwise, turn to 21.

**109** "'Tis no knightly way of war," Laodamas says, shuddering. "Someone should go after that devil Zogar Sag."

Laodamas' thoughts run parallel to your own. If you could steal through these woods to the shaman's war-cabin, overcome his earthly or supernatural guardians, and slay him there, this battle might be won.

If you resolve to hunt Zogar Sag down on your own, turn to 71.

If you believe that your army is equal to whatever magic the old shaman can summon, turn to 24.

**110** Your archers, with the relentless rhythm of automatons, nock arrows and loose them in the surging mass. Pict after Pict falls screaming, trying to draw a shaft from his chest or writhing in his death throes. Blood flows unchecked across last winter's leaves, and soaks into the thick humus of the forest floor. The motionless air drinks in the stench of blood and sweat and fear.

Resolve this portion of the battle by trying a Battle Contest, pitting the Tactics skill of your commander against that of the Pict war chief.

If your *Plot Word* is FEARLESS, use your own Tactics score. If your *Plot Word* is WARRIOR, use the average of your skill and Captain Arno's, and apply a -3 penalty due to the lack of unified command. If you have neither of these *Plot Words*, use Captain Arno's Tactics skill (listed on Force Roster A, on p. 30 of the appendix).

The Picts have little mastery of tactics. Their war chief's Tactics score is 1d+4. (Make a note of this, in case the battle continues for future rounds.)

Apply any bonuses to this Battle Contest which you have been previously directed to use. In addition, if you have the *Plot Word* UNCONQUERABLE, give yourself an additional +4 bonus.

Make a note of the result, and turn to 23.

**111** You try to disengage from this combat, but the unearthly servant of Zogar Sag comes after you with incredible speed, slashing once more with its deadly talons.

Make a DX roll.

If you succeed, turn to 26.

If you fail, turn to 53.

**112** "I see Hawk, Wolf, Turtle, Ferret, Raven and Otter braves," whispers Flavius, "all in seeming unity."

"When they unite, Aquilonia beware," you mutter.

Make a Vision roll, at a -2 penalty due to twilight conditions.

If you succeed, turn to 25.

If you fail, turn to 159.

**113** You slash at your bitten arm with your knife. Putting your lips to the ragged pair of holes at the center of the wound, you suck out the blood and spit it to the ground. A dark discoloration spreads over most of your forearm. The pain is agonizing.

Make a HT roll at -3.

If you succeed, turn to 162.

If you fail, turn to 28.

**114** While Laodamas takes his time in getting ready, Glyco dresses quickly and takes you aside.

"Have you really no inkling of who the visitor to the Picts' camp was?" he asks.

You shake your head. "I have only speculations," you admit. "I only know that it couldn't have been you or Laodamas — you'd not have beat us back to Velitrium, I think."

Glyco scratches his beard. "I know that you dislike Laodamas, but go easy on him. He's a young ninnyhammer, but I think him a loyal one."

Turn to 27.

**115** If you lost the Battle Contest by 4 or more points, turn to 138.

If you won the battle by 4 or more points, turn to 30.

In all other cases, turn to 57.



**116** "Heads will pay for this treachery," you vow. "Those were my soldiers trapped in that ambush. Glyco, how many survived?"

If your *Plot Word* is INVINCIBLE, turn to 163.

If not, turn to 29.

**117** You grunt. "These woods at midday should be alive with birdsong and the chattering of squirrels."

"It's as silent hereabouts as a graveyard," says your lieutenant.

Your *Plot Word* is LIBERATOR.

If you have the *Plot Word* COURAGEOUS, turn to 32.

If not, turn to 166.

**118** It soon becomes clear that your plan is working — the Picts are gathering exactly where you want them. You march your army into position across the path of the savages' advance.

Turn to 165.

**119** "Back in the ranks, there!" you roar. The flat of your sword fells the fleeing Aquilonian.

Make a Leadership roll, with a penalty equal to the number of squads on your force roster which are demoralized. (Leadership defaults to ST-5.)

If you succeed and have the *Plot Word* WARLORD, turn to 54.

If you succeed, but do not have the *Plot Word* mentioned, turn to 157.

If you fail, turn to 138 (if you have the *Plot Word* BARBARIAN) or to 139 (if you don't have this *Plot Word*).

**120** If you have the *Plot Word* STRONG, turn immediately to 207.

If you have the *Plot Word* DAUNTLESS, turn to 167.

If you have the *Plot Word* INTREPID, turn to 207.

In all other cases, turn to 33.

**121** "My children," begins the Aquilonian, "your great and loyal friend, General Viscount Lucian, is not one whose words are straw. He said he would betray a company of troops into your hands, and did he not? Even though a brave captain saved those troops today, Viscount Lucian gives his word that this officer will not be there when you fall upon Schohira."

Turn to 36.

**122** Then your keen eyes spot the outline of a Pict, leaning against a tree, no doubt staring in the direction of the massing savages. With exquisite care, you approach the fellow from the rear.

Roll a Quick Contest, pitting your Stealth against his Hearing (12).

If he loses, turn to 35.

Otherwise, he hears you and whirls around — turn to 131.

**123** "Take prisoners," you remind your fellows. "They're your proof of all I've said!"

From now on, the strangers' only goal is to escape from this ambush. To do so, they will run to the boat and try to cast off from the pier. This is easy, as the current will move them one hex per turn downriver (see the current flow arrow on the map) once they untie or sever the rope.



Untying requires a minimum of 2 turns and a successful DX roll. If they attempt to cut the rope, it is DR 1 and has 2 hit points.

Return to the paragraph which sent you here.

**124** Shaking the blood and sweat from your eyes, you wheel and run staggering through the woods, swinging Zogar Sag's head by its hair.

Turn to 171.

**125** The sentry enters the villa, then returns and says, "The general is being shaved, sir. He begs you wait . . ."

"To hell with him! If he comes not forth to treat with us, then we shall go to him. Tell His Lordship that!"

Roll another Quick Contest of ST, but give yourself a +6 bonus (for your rank, plus anger). The sentry's ST is 14.

If you lose again, turn to 40.

If you don't, turn to 174.

**126** A knock precedes the opening of the door, and a lean man in the tight leather garments of a royal messenger enters. "General?" he asks, looking at you.

"Aye. What is it?" you grunt.

"I have the honor to deliver this missive from His Majesty." He hands over a scroll with a deferential bow.

If you are literate, turn to 39.

If you aren't, turn to 173.

**127** A drum begins to beat like a throbbing heart. Yelping war cries, the Picts advance. Amid the savage whoops and shouts of command, arrows whistle across the flatland like specters of the damned.

Consult Force Roster B on p. 00 of the appendix, and compare the Missile Bonus totals for each side. If your *Plot Word* is INVINCIBLE, add the surviving totals from Force Roster A to your score — then turn to 137.

**128** Suddenly, a horde of painted savages erupts from the woods.

Turn to 3.

**129** Then, shockingly, the creature speaks to you. The voice is human, but carries strange vibrations that are not. "Why do you stand like a sheep waiting for the butcher, captain?"

"Sheep?" You wrath overcomes your momentary awe. "A friend called to me."

"I called in his voice," answers the other. "You are mine. O fool, you have come to the forests of the Westernmark to meet your doom. My brother has painted a skull black for you, and hurled it into the fire that burns forever on Gullah's black altar. He has whispered your name to the black ghosts that haunt the uplands of the Dark Land. A bat has flown over the Mountains of the Dead, and drawn your image in blood on the white tiger's hide that hangs before the long hut where sleep the Four Brothers of the Night. The great serpents coil about their feet, and the stars burn like fireflies in their hair."



If you continue this conversation, turn to 44.

If you attack the entity, turn to 102.

If you try to flee, turn to 6.

**130** The Pict cacophony ends abruptly. The Aquilonians, disturbed by the sudden silence, eye the woods fearfully.

Then a piercing scream rips through the uncanny stillness.

If your *Plot Word* is MIGHTY, turn to 5.

If your *Plot Word* is STRONG, turn to 177.

If your *Plot Word* is TRIUMPHANT, turn to 92.

If you haven't any of these *Plot Words*, turn to 43.

**131** Hearing a twig snap behind him, the guard whirls in time to face your attack.

Only he's no Pict. You stare into the emotionless visage of a horned foe, and think you glimpse a flickering like red-hot sparks glinting from the depths of his eyes. There's a second one, emerging from the woods several yards behind the first.

Make a Fright Check at -2. Record the results, if any, on your character sheet.

Use Combat Map A for this battle. You are at P. Your enemies are Scavengers from the Mountain of the Dead (stats are provided on p. 29). They are at C and CC.

Turn to 180.

**132** Surging ahead with a burst of speed, you dash into the woods, farther and farther ahead of your slower companion.

You never see the brave lad again.

Ignore further references to "Flavius." Return to 217, but use your own Move score from now on.

**133** "Then we must do it another way," you grunt. Throwing down your grisly burden and your weapons, you grasp Laodamas' ankle, jerk it out of the stirrup, and heave it up.

"What . . ." cries Laodamas.

Roll a Quick Contest of ST, pitting yourself against Laodamas. His stats are given on p. 28.

If you win, turn to 48.

If you don't win, turn to 95.

**134** A glimmer of an idea comes to you. "What I propose is this," you say. "Let's beard Lucian in his den, and bring him face to face with the pay chest. Then we'll see if he has the presence of mind to stay cool, or whether he confesses on the spot."

Turn to 181.

**135** "Reconnaissance in force," you growl to your young lieutenant, Flavius. "Sending two half-companies along the creek, with no force to back us up in case of trouble, when the Picts can bring together thousands . . . Under these conditions, it invites disaster!"

You like nothing about this expedition, which seems foolhardy to the point of insanity.

"To war with the Picts, you need news before the fight, and numbers during it. So you scatter your scouts to seek the size and position of the foe, then concentrate your troops to hit them hard."

"But that takes careful timing, sir," says Flavius.

Your *Plot Word* is VALIANT.

Turn to 184.



**136** With amazing speed, Lucian rises from his stool and, snatching a bowl of scalding, soapy water from the barber, hurls it at your face.

Make a Dodge roll.

If you succeed, you avoid the peril — turn to 183.

If you fail, turn to 49.

**137** If either side has a 2-to-1 advantage, that side will receive a +1 bonus on the next Battle Contest. Likewise, a 3-to-1 advantage is worth a +2 bonus. An advantage of 5-to-1 or better is worth a +3 bonus.

Make a note of the earned bonus (if any), as well as who receives it, and turn to 42 (if you have the *Plot Word* BAR-BARIAN) or to 52 (if you don't have this *Plot Word*).

**138** Crushed by the Pict onslaught, your army dissolves into isolated stands of surrounded soldiers, while still others break and run for the supposed safety in the east. The savages have won this battle — and with it, Schohira province.

You are disgraced as a general. Unless you wish to face Numedides' Iron Tower dungeon, you have no choice but to seek escape in the only direction open to you: the west.

No civilized man has ever crossed Pictland to arrive on the western ocean, but geography leaves you no options.

*Your adventure is over.*

**139** It is too late — panic has taken hold. The Frontier Guards dissolve into a stream of fugitives, casting aside weapons and armor in their headlong flight. The Picts swarm after them, hacking, stabbing and cudgeling all they overtake.

"This way!" you yell to your lieutenant — Flavius, if he is alive, or whoever has been promoted to take his place. "If you'd leave this place alive, follow me!"

The two of you hasten northwestward, away from the mass of fleeing Aquilonians and their savage pursuers. However, your departure does not go entirely unnoticed.

Use Combat Map A. Place Picts at locations P1 and P2. You are at C; Flavius is at F. See p. 29 for rules on determining the stats of the savages you are up against.

Stats for Flavius are given on p. 28 of the appendix. If Flavius is dead or out of action, substitute the appropriate promoted officer from Force Roster A on p. 30; however, the character has the same stats as Flavius, except for HT and Tactics.

Fight the battle.

If you win, no other Picts intervene in your escape — turn to 188.

If you are killed, *your adventure is over.*

If you lose consciousness, turn to 56.

**140** Suddenly the creature is towering over you, though you did not see it move toward you. A long arm with curving, sickle-like talons swings high and sweeps down at your neck.

Make a Will roll.

If you succeed, you break free of the spell with a fierce oath and bound aside — turn to 187.

If you fail, turn to 53.

**141** "'Tis a mystery to me, lad," you sigh. "All that's clear is that there's a traitor in Aquilonia, and you and I were betrayed to the savages today as part of their plan. Crom, I distrust these officers . . ."

"If you despise us Aquilonians," says Flavius, angered, "why do you risk your neck fighting for us?"

You shrug in the moonless forest. "I despise no good man, and Aquilonia has its share of great and poor like any other nation. The quarrels of lords have no meaning for me, as I am a mercenary. I sell my sword to the highest bidder. So long as he pays me, I give fair value in strength and strokes."

Turn to 103.

**142** You approach the cabin, but as you do so, the ear-splitting sounds of drum and rattle die away.

Turn to 55.

**143** The viscount sees that the king declares you an outlaw and a traitor. Pursued by royal inquisitors, you have no choice but to seek escape in the only direction open to you: the west.

No civilized man has ever crossed Pictland to arrive on the western ocean, but geography leaves you no options.

*Your adventure is over.*

**144** Rallying your soldiers, you lead them against the savage foe, holding aloft your gory trophy — Zogar Sag's head, affixed to a pike.

"Cry 'Zogar Sag is dead!' Sound the trumpets!" you bellow. Your men take up the chant in a deep, resonant cry.

Although the Picts know not the words, the moonlight silvers the grisly visage of the dead shaman, and they understand the meaning. Yammering at one another, the savages point to the hideous head and, wailing in dismay, break on every side, ignoring the shouting of their chiefs.

You receive a +5 bonus on all future Battle Contests, thanks to the demoralizing trophy you wave. Make a note of this.

Turn to 57.

**145** The general flings himself into the saddle of his stallion. The horse disappears down the street at a gallop, clods of mud flying from its hooves.

"You'll never catch him," says Glyco glumly. "That's the best horse in all the Westermarck." Laodamas, not listening, orders his cavalymen back to the stables, so that they can mount up and pursue the traitor.

"It doesn't matter," you tell Glyco. "Whether King Numedides has Lucian beheaded as a traitor, or merely sends him to some other province, at least we'll not have to deal with him again."

Your *Plot Word* is BOLD.

Turn to 194.

**146** As you return to your column, two men rush forward to greet you. One is a stocky, brown-haired officer, with sweat running down his red, round face. He is Captain Arno, your co-commander. The other is a lean man, with a brown skin seamed by thousands of wrinkles. He is clad in buckskin, and bears a bow and hunting falchion.

"Captain," says the stocky man, "my pig-stickers begin to tire. They need a short rest."

"They find this a hard march!" You laugh. "They need hardening. And go stop their loose tongues. If there's a Pict within a league, he'll know where and how many we are."

Captain Arno scowls. "Curb your tongue! Without my pikemen, your Bossonians would be defenseless against the savages."

General Lucian's orders putting you and Arno in joint command of this expedition have irked you from the beginning. Two leaders of one force is an invitation to disaster.

Once again, it's a showdown between you and your co-commander. Roll a Quick Contest of Leadership; Arno's Leadership score is 1d+10. If you have Area Knowledge (Westermarck), give yourself a +2 bonus. Leadership skill defaults to (ST-5).

If you win by 2 points or more, turn to 59.

If you lose by 2 points or more, or if you decide to defer to Captain Arno, turn to 193.

Otherwise, turn to 108.

**147** "After our recent victory, Zogar Sag rightly fears a fair battle against our Aquilonians," you tell Flavius. "Having made the traditional assault, the old shaman will now resort to his more unearthly ways . . ."

"Pictish sorcery!" gasps your companion.

Turn to 62.

**148** Also, when an officer is put out of action, there are penalties which apply to the upcoming Battle Contest and to the next set of Morale rolls. See the chart below, and make a note of the results.

Officer Out of Action	Battle Contest Modifier	Morale Modifier
Yourself	-2	-3
Any other captain	-2	-2
Any lieutenant**	-2	-1
Any sergeant-major*	-1	-1
Any sergeant*	+0	-1

\* This can happen only if a character of this rank is promoted to replace a felled officer, and is himself thrust out of action.

\*\* Unless you have the *Plot Word* BARBARIAN, this can happen only if a character of this rank is promoted to replace a felled officer, and is himself thrust out of action.

When you are ready, turn to 176 if you have the *Plot Word* BARBARIAN, or to 61 if you do not.

**149** Your enemy is a *swamp devil* — see p. 29 of the appendix for a full description. Its preferred tactic is to slash at the head or vitals with its powerful talons, while keeping the maximum distance from its opponent.

Turn to 64.

**150** "You mean we must lurk here like this until nightfall?" asks your companion.

"Be still," you warn. "Our lives depend on remaining undetected."

"I'll try," says Flavius gamely.

Insects hum around you, and the frogs, which had fallen silent when you neared the sacred rocks, now resume their croaking chorus. Slowly the woods darken, as a red sun hangs ever lower above the fan of greenery.

Picts in ones and twos flit among the trees. The clearing fills as the savages, in clan regalia, squat in rows and pass around skins of weak native beer, amid chatter and boasting.

Suddenly, you feel a sharp and sudden pain in your calf.

Make a Will roll. If you have the Squeamish disadvantage, there is a -4 penalty to this roll.

If you succeed, turn to 197.

If you fail, turn to 63.

**151** Roll a Quick Contest, your Stealth against Zogar Sag's effective Hearing (13).

If you win, turn to 200.

Otherwise, he hears you — turn to 66.

**152** As a deep growl rises in your throat, Laodamas takes back his words. "But it *might* be true. One of us, a traitor? Glyco, Lucian — or myself? How are we to know that it isn't *you*, captain?"

Turn to 199.

**153** Abruptly, a glow in the woods behind your forces catches your eyes. The blue-green flickering resolves itself into a lumpy cloud, which condenses into darker masses — swamp devils, bathed in the cold flames of marsh gas.

Shrieking and howling, the demons race hither and yon, at every stride striking down an Aquilonian with a sweep of their talons. Soldiers panic and break. Next to you a Gunderman, his head shorn clean by a sweep of demonic claws, takes two steps before he falls into the brush.

Make a Fright Check at -2. Record the results, if any, on your character sheet. Apply a +5 bonus to the Picts' future Battle Contest rolls.

Turn to 202.

**154** "We were at Council Rocks," you admit, watching the scout's eyes widen. "There's more than enough evidence to lock you away in a royal gaol from now until Stygia freezes over. This is your last chance — talk, man!"

Roll a Quick Contest of your IQ, Fast-Talk skill or Diplomacy skill (your choice) against Edric's IQ (11).

If you win, turn to 201.

If you lose, he doesn't talk — return to 58 and choose a new option.

**155** The second man, a lean frontiersman, now steps forward. He's Edric, one of Lucian's scouts.

"Who is on our flanks?" you ask.

"Not a sign of a Pict the whole length of South Creek," he reports.

Make a Detect Lies roll (defaults to IQ-6 or Psychology-4). If you have the *Plot Word* MAJESTIC, give yourself a +4 bonus.

If you succeed, turn to 70.

If you fail, turn to 204.

**156** Hours later, you and the other captains meet to discuss strategy for the battle you all know is coming. Included is Flavius, who you have promoted to take your place as captain of the Bossonians.

"All the troops fear Pictish sorcery," says Glyco.

You shrug. "We must do what we can with what we have. Crom and Mitra grant that it is enough."

"What is your plan?" asks Flavius.

"The Picts' next thrust is likely to be across South Creek into Schohira, since that's the province Lucian sold to them," you explain.

Make a Strategy roll (defaults to IQ-6 or Tactics-6).

If you succeed, turn to 69.

If you fail, turn to 203.

**157** The screech of a bone whistle cuts through the roar of battle. Pict chiefs run among the blood-crazed savages, pulling them back. Limping or hobbling down the forest trails, your enemies fade into the budding branches and are gone. However, something tells you that they will be returning soon.

If you have the *Plot Word* BARBARIAN, turn immediately to 51.

If you have the *Plot Word* UNCONQUERABLE, turn to 3.

Otherwise, you now have time to form your soldiers into battle formation — turn to 175.

**158** “Laodamas!” you yell. Eyeing the field, you see exactly what you expected: the resumed assault by the savages is uncoordinated, with knots of braves scattered all across the meadow. “‘Tis the moment. Launch your charge!”

If your *Plot Word* is MERCENARY, turn to 220.  
Otherwise, turn to 10.



**159** Two figures, distinct from the throng of nearly naked savages, step into the clearing. One is a shaman, wearing a harness in which is set a score of tinted ostrich feathers — Zogar Sag, no doubt.

Cutting a path through the squatting warriors, the two arrivals climb the smaller of the Council Rocks. To your surprise, when one of them begins to speak, it is unaccented Aquilonian which falls on your ears, to be translated by the figure beside him into the Picts' primitive tongue.

Your *Plot Word* is CHAMPION.  
Turn to 74.

**160** The demon staggers and sprawls sideways. Its fires leap fiercely upward, now red as gushing blood, hiding the figure from view. A scent of burning flesh fills your nostrils.

Make a Fright Check at +5. Record the results, if any, on your character sheet.

Turn to 73.

**161** The man looks suspiciously around the water front. You, the closest of the officers, try to remain inconspicuous and silent.

Try a Quick Contest, pitting the man's Tracking (16) against your Stealth.

If you lose, turn to 76.

Otherwise, turn to 210.

**162** You take an instant to strip Zogar Sag of the belt which supported his loincloth, making it into a crude tourniquet for your upper arm. You fret to be gone, fearing discovery by other of the savages — but to set out now would be to risk death from the venom. You force yourself to continue sucking and spitting.

At last, the purplish stain spreads no farther.

Take half of your ST in Fatigue. You should be careful of any exertion in the next few hours — unflushed venom can still kill you.

Your *Plot Word* is VICTIM.

Turn to 124.

**163** “Arno marched back here with all of the survivors from your battle with the savages, except seven who died from their wounds,” said Glyco. “To bring them back whole from such a one-sided engagement speaks volumes about the kind of battleground leadership you and Arno provided.”

Turn to 78.

**164** You spur your mount, to overtake the head of Glyco's column. Then a fiery pain lances through your chest. Twisted by massive convulsions, you are unable to stay in the saddle — and sprawling on the ground, you cannot control your limbs and regain your feet. The forest is spinning around you as you choke on your spittle, shudder and die.

The snake's unflushed venom has done its work. *Your adventure is over.*

**165** Back from an open meadow, you post your army in the dense forest. Pikemen and archers are arrayed in a crescent, while Laodamas' cavalry are concealed on your right flank. You walk up and down the line, inspecting equipment, encouraging the fearful with rude jokes, and giving commands.

Make a Strategy roll at +2 (This defaults to IQ-4 or Tactics-4).

If you succeed, turn to 80.

If you fail, turn to 127.

**166** Suddenly a sound breaks the silence. It is the hoot of an owl.

Make a Naturalist roll (defaults to IQ-6). If you have the *Plot Word* LIBERATOR, give yourself a +3 bonus.

If you succeed, turn to 79.

If you fail, turn to 128.

**167** You have just crossed a small glade when you wheel, answering the conviction of your primitive instincts that you are being followed. Standing motionless among the bushes, you strain for the faintest sound that would betray your stalker. Then a voice calls faintly, back along the way you came: “Captain, wait for me! Wait for me!”

“Flavius,” you swear, bewildered. “Here I am!”

"Wait for me," comes the voice, more distinctly.

You move toward it out of the shadows, scowling. "What the devil are you doing here . . . Crom!"

Roll a Fright Check. Record the results, if any, on your character sheet.

If your *Plot Word* is TRIUMPHANT, turn to 82.

If it isn't, turn to 216.

**168** "Why have the savages quit, when they outnumber us ten to one?" asks your co-commander, wiping blood and sweat from his face.

"Crom only knows," you grunt. "Form up in columns of four, pikes without, archers within! We're marching back for Velitrium!"

The men obediently resume their snaking column, but before they can go a hundred paces, the sound of rattling and drumming comes from the woods around you.

Your *Plot Word* is WARLORD.

Try an IQ roll, at -2 due to the wearisome battle just past.

If you succeed, turn to 215.

If you fail, turn to 81.



**169** Turning around, you stare into the emotionless visage of a foe summoned from the darkest depths of oblivion. Sparks glinting from the depths of his dark eyes, and a coldness wafts through the still forest air. He is a man-like being, but his rough blue-hued flesh is like that of a shark, and two great horns protrude from the sides of his skull.

Make a Fright Check at +5. Record the results, if any, on your character sheet.

Use Combat Map A for this battle. You are at P. Your enemy is a Scavenger from the Mountain of the Dead (stats are provided on p. 29). He is at P2. There is a body at F.

Turn to 180.

**170** The speech is distorted on the evening breeze. You catch only two tantalizing words — Lucian, and Schohira!

Your *Plot Word* is DESTROYER.

Turn to 83.

**171** The rising roar of battle comes to you from afar. The Picts, impatient of the delay by their shaman leader, have resumed their assault. Circling behind the savage mobs, you emerge from the woods among your own forces.

Your *Plot Word* is RENEGADE.

If your *Plot Word* is INDESTRUCTIBLE, turn immediately to 86.

If your *Plot Word* is REBEL, turn to 144.

In any other case, turn to 57.

**172** "Damnation," you curse. "There goes my last hope of proving the truth to you."

"Now what do you propose?" demands Laodamas.

If you are in possession of the strangers' chest, turn to 85.

If the strangers fled with their chest, or if you fled from the battle, turn to 9.

**173** You break the seal, unroll the scroll, and hand it to Flavius. "Read it to me, son," you say. "The light in here is too feeble for my eyes."

Turn to 88.

**174** With a small sigh, the sentry enters the house. Presently, General Viscount Lucian appears with a towel around his neck. He wears breeches and boots, but his upper torso is bare. He is a short, stocky man of middle age, whose well-developed muscles are growing flabby. His black moustache, usually a pair of stiff waxed points, is frayed and drooping prior to its morning application of pomade.

"Well, gentlemen," says Lucian haughtily, "to what emergency do I owe this untimely visit?" He orders a sentry to fetch a stool, so that his barber can finish shaving the general while this discussion continues. "What is it you would say to me, captain?"

"Few words," you growl. "But I have something to show you." You gesture savagely, and the soldiers in the street climb the steps and deposit the pay chest on the mosaic floor of the terrace.

Make a Will roll for Lucian. (His score is 12.)

If he succeeds, turn to 87.

If he fails, turn to 2.

**175** The perimeter bristles with the points of fifty-odd pikemen. Behind each stands an archer, bow in hand and arrow nocked. The pikemen kneel on the soft, leaf-covered forest floor, their pikes butt to the ground, shafts slanting forward, points waist high. You, Captain Arno, and the two lieutenants each post yourselves at a corner of the formation, to defend these vital points and to command the nearest soldiers.

Your men have barely formed when the horde of painted savages erupts from the surrounding woods.

You have the *Plot Word* UNCONQUERABLE.

Turn to 3.

**176** Knots of Picts dash themselves against your line of pikemen. When one savage is transfixed by a pike and his weight drags the weapon down, others push in through the gap thus created, thrusting with spears and slashing with hatchets. Pikemen of the second line, sweating and cursing, thrust them back. About the meadow, the wounded crawl, twitch, shriek or lay still.

Your cavalry remains concealed in the deeper woods.

If your *Plot Word* is INDESTRUCTIBLE, turn to 4.

Otherwise, turn to 89.

**177** A man staggers out of ranks and falls writhing among the twisted roots. Another likewise falls. Suddenly the column vibrates with fearful cries of horror.

Snakes — Pictish snakes, some as long as a man, others small and beautifully patterned — drop from the trees. On the forest floor they coil, heads swaying, and lunge at the nearest soldiers.

"Swords!" you order. "Kill them! Keep your ranks, but kill them!"

Make a Fright Check. Record the results, if any, on your character sheet.

Turn to 72.

**178** If you ask the creature to reveal itself from behind its enshrouding mists first, turn to 91.

If not, turn to 6.

**179** Away you move, bending low to shield your passage from the sight of any Pict sentinel. You strike eastward along the creek trail. So little moonlight penetrates the dense cover that you must trust more to instincts than to your senses.

Passing the site of today's battle, you scent the fetid stench of bodies already rotting. A scavenger beast crashes into the woods at your approach.

"What happened back there?" asks your companion, when you are safely across South Creek. "What is their plan, and who is the traitor?"

Make a Politics roll (defaults to IQ-5 or Diplomacy-5).

If you succeed, and if you have the *Plot Word* DESTROYER, turn to 7.

If you succeed, but don't have the *Plot Word* DESTROYER, turn to 94.

If you fail, turn to 141.

**180** Begin the combat. If your enemy is killed, turn to 93.

If you are killed, *your adventure is over*.

If you are knocked unconscious, turn to 56 (if your *Plot Word* is STRONG) or to 53 (if you don't have this *Plot Word*).

If you flee this battle, turn to 37.

**181** "And if you're wrong," says Laodamas, "we'll be up on mutiny charges, and a swift execution come down . . ."

If you try to persuade your fellow officers to attempt this plan, turn to 96.

If you decide there is nothing more you can do, turn to 9.

**182** "Get the hell out of here," you bellow. "I'm taking command of this unit."

Make a Quick Contest of Leadership, pitting your score (defaults to ST-5) against Laodamas'. If you have the *Plot Words* INVINCIBLE or UNCONQUERABLE, give yourself a +2 bonus; if you have both, you get a +5 bonus. If you have the *Plot Word* REBEL, you receive an additional +2 bonus.

If you lose, turn to 95.

If you don't lose, Laodamas gives in to your demands — turn to 10.

**183** Like a striking serpent, Lucian moves. Placing both hands on the pay chest, he gives a mighty shove. It topples off the terrace and down the stairs, spewing forth a veritable rain of precious disks. A gasp of delight comes from the soldiers in the road.

If you are already involved in combat, immediately move

Lucian adjacent to the pay chest, then relocate the chest to XX on the Combat Map.

Immediately try an IQ roll — at -4 — for each of your soldiers. Any who fail scramble for coins, and are of no further use in this encounter. Glyco, Flavius, Laodamas and the sentries are not so tempted.

When you are ready for further instructions, turn to 11 (if you are already in combat) or to 98 (if combat hasn't yet begun).

**184** "Aye," you agree. "In war, if you miscalculate, you're dead. Timing, lad, is half the art of battle — what King Numedides' gilded generals, including our very own Lucian, would call strategy."

"What think you of Viscount Lucian?" asks Flavius.

Try an IQ roll, to see what you have been able to learn about your commanding officer and the governor of Conajohara province (what is left of it, that is). If you have the *Plot Word* VALOROUS, give yourself a +2 bonus.

If you succeed, turn to 97.

If you fail, turn to 12.

**185** "Archers!" you shout. "Two men from each squad harvest arrows." The Bossonians hasten forward to pull spent shafts from the ground or from the blood-soaked bodies of the fallen. The Gundermen cleanse their equipment, and drink deeply from their waterskins.

Flavius doffs his helmet to wipe his blood-splattered face. "If that be just a skirmish, I hate to contemplate the onslaught," he says. "How did you know they would withdraw?"

If you do not have the *Plot Word* WARLORD, turn immediately to 13.

Otherwise, make a Strategy roll, at +2 (defaults to IQ-4 or Tactics-4).

If you succeed at the roll, turn to 147 (if you have the *Plot Word* INVINCIBLE) or to 100 (in all other cases).

If you fail, turn to 13.

**186** If you do not know what a Survival roll is, see the rules on p. 25. Apply any damage to the character's HT, listed on the Force Roster or on your character sheet. Remember that characters can take risks now in order to earn glory later.

If your *Plot Word* is RENEGADE, turn to 14.

Otherwise, turn to 99.

**187** Use Combat Map A. You are at CC. The creature is at X.

When you have the scene set up, turn to 15 (if your *Plot Word* is MIGHTY) or to 149 (if you don't have this *Plot Word*).

**188** You push deep toward the west, until you reach the luxuriant marshes flanking the mouth of South Creek. The creek spreads voluptuously beneath the blue sky, which it catches in reflected splendor.

"Where are we heading?" asks your lieutenant at last, curious.

You point ahead. On the creek's right bank is a clearing, once neglected and overgrown, but lately cleared once more. In its midst rises a granite statue twice the height of a man. Little more than an upright boulder, it has been roughly trimmed to suggest a human shape. In front of this rude image, a smaller, flat-topped boulder appears above the long grass. Through the trees on the clearing's far side you can see the steel-blue water of Black River, the frontier of Pictland before Zogar Sag led his braves on the reconquest.

"The Council Rocks," you mutter to your companion.

"This is the traditional site for the war chiefs to meet. If we conceal ourselves here, we shall no doubt overhear their plans this night."

"But they'll spy us, and take us prisoner . . . or worse," says Flavius.

Your *Plot Word* is BARBARIAN.

Try an IQ roll.

If you succeed, turn to 101.

If you fail, turn to 16.

**189** You step around the fire, preparing a swift blow to once and for all end this devilish menace. The silent figure remains motionless. It is indeed Zogar Sag, in breech clout and moccasins, sitting upright with his eyes closed as if in a trance.

If your *Plot Word* is STRONG, turn immediately to 17.

If your *Plot Word* is DAUNTLESS, turn to 104.

Otherwise, turn to 151.

**190** "Knowing that Edric is a traitor, and that Lucian palmed him off on us," you mutter, "I'm inclined to suspect that fat fool."

"But he has noble blood," splutters Flavius. "How could he betray his nation?"

You grin a mirthless smile. "Laodamas has noble blood as well, lad, and Captain Glyco has served Aquilonia for a lifetime."

Turn to 103.

**191** You stand at the fore of your men, thrusting and smiting to right and left, riding the charger you have commandeered. Officers find themselves lost in the chaotic mass, unable to affect the course of events.

Make a Survival roll for each general and captain in your force, including any character replacing an officer who has fallen. Turn to Force Roster B on p. 00 of the appendix for a list of officers and their Battle scores.

For further instructions, turn to 186.

**192** "Very well," you say. "Flavius, give me his knife. Then set the brazier here." He hands it to you, and you thumb it purposefully. "I dislike to use my own blade, because heating it red hot takes the temper out of the steel."

Roll a Quick Contest of your Interrogation (defaults to IQ-5) or Acting (defaults to IQ-5 or Bard-5) skills against Edric's Will (12). You receive a +3 bonus to your roll for making severe threats.

If you win the contest, turn to 201.

If you do not win, turn to 105.

**193** You give in to the older man. "Let them rest, but only for a moment."

"I'll let you know when the column is ready to press on," says Arno smugly. You think about planting a boot in his backside as he turns away, but resist the impulse.

Turn to 155.

**194** "We've rid ourself of the traitor, but this isn't the end of it," you warn the celebrating officers. "The savages are moving to conquer Schohira, and it's up to the Frontier Guard to stop them. Who comes with me, to save the land for Mitra and Numedides?"

"Follow you?" says Laodamas, wrinkling his nose. "I should command the venture. I am of noble blood, and stand

above you on the promotion list. For you to command would be most irregular . . ."

If you concede the generalship to Laodamas, turn immediately to 107.

Otherwise, make a Quick Contest of Leadership, pitting your score against Laodamas'. (Leadership defaults to ST-5.) If you have the *Plot Words* INVINCIBLE or UNCONQUERABLE, give yourself a +2 bonus; if you have both, you get a +5 bonus.

If you win, turn to 22.

If you don't win, turn to 107.

**195** The table below indicates the Battle Contest bonus earned for the side with the indicated advantage.

1.2 to 1, or less	no bonus
1.2-1.4 to 1	+1
1.4-1.7 to 1	+2
1.7-2 to 1	+3
2-3 to 1	+4
3-5 to 1	+5
5-7 to 1	+6
7-10 to 1	+7
better than 10 to 1	+8

Make a note of the earned bonus (if any), as well as who receives it.

If your *Plot Word* is RENEGADE, turn immediately to 191.

If your *Plot Word* is BARBARIAN, turn to 127.

In all other cases, turn to 110.

**196** "Hark!" you say. From the deep woods comes the distant sound of a drum and a rattle — the tools of a Pictish wizard.

"Magic does not terrify me," says Captain Glyco, approaching with Laodamas to make a tactical report. "But I'll not vouch for my pikemen."

Turn to 109.

**197** You endure the pain. You know that the little swamp sucker, repulsive as it is, cannot steal enough of your blood to weaken you.

Turn to 112.

**198** The flames of the creature lap at you, bringing a chill colder than ice. Your eyes are dazzled by the brilliance of the blue-green flames.

You lose 1 ST in fatigue on any turn in which you are in physical contact with the swamp demon.

Return to 64.

**199** Laodamas appeals to the older officer. "Good Glyco, tell me, am I hearing treason, or have they both gone mad?"

Glyco takes his time before replying. "It's a serious charge. However, our captain friend has shown his loyalty throughout the Pict uprising, and young Flavius is one of our best young officers."

You nod. "I won't hazard anyone's neck without evidence which you can see for yourself. That pay chest should cross Thunder River soon. If you two will finish dressing, we can intercept it as it arrives ashore."

If you have the *Plot Word* CHAMPION, turn to 114.

If not, turn to 27.

**200** Your whistling blow ends in a meaty thud. Zogar Sag's head flies off, rolls toward the embers, and comes to rest on the hard-packed earth. Blood pours from the collapsing body, soaking into the earth and hissing as it floods over the hot coals in the center of the cabin. Sinister vapors rise in the dim rosy light.

You now have the *Plot Word* REBEL.

If your *Plot Word* is STRONG, turn to 113.

Otherwise, turn to 124.

**201** "I'll talk," whines Edric, cowering. "A devil like you could wring a confession from a dead man." He draws a deep breath.

"Viscount Lucian promised to make us rich when Schohira fell to the Picts. We of Oriskonie have little care for the rest of the Westermarck — what have we had from the Aquilonian lords but robbery and abuse?"

Edric confesses to setting up yesterday's ambush, and admits that Viscount Lucian is the chief Aquilonian traitor.

Turn to 116.

**202** Resolve this portion of the battle by trying a Battle Contest, pitting your Strategy against that of the Pict war chief (which you recorded earlier).

Apply any bonuses to this Battle Contest which you have been previously directed to use. The following *Plot Words* (or their absence) provide adjustments to the roll:

<i>Plot Word</i>	<i>Bonus</i>
AVENGER	+4 bonus
INVINCIBLE	+2 bonus
CIMMERIA	-2 penalty
REBEL	+4 bonus

Note the result, and turn to 23.

**203** "We'll muster our forces at Schondara, where the open country favors the use of Laodamas' cavalry," you tell them. "The savages will have to deal with us there, before they can penetrate into the back country."

"But Zogar Sag . . ." says Laodamas.

"The devil take Zogar Sag! Whoever told you that soldiering was a safe trade?" you growl.

Schondara, the capital of Schohira province, is handsome for a frontier village. The neat houses are of squared logs, some painted, with a few frame buildings. Unlike the villages of the more northerly provinces, however, Schondara is defended by neither a ditch nor a palisade — until Zogar Sag united the Wolf tribes into his coalition, this province had a relatively peaceful border.

Roll one die.

On a roll of 1 to 5, turn to 31.

If you roll a 6, turn to 118.

**204** By mid morning, the column reaches the point on the trail where the path crosses South Creek. Whispering, you order the men in front to fill their water skins, and to quietly pass the word along.

When the sun looks down from the center of the sky, your troop has covered another league along South Creek as it tumbles over its stony bed in its haste to reach Black River. Aside from the rippling water, the forest is as silent as a tomb.

Flavius glances uneasily about the glade. "It seems too quiet to me," he says.

Try an IQ roll at -4. Give yourself a +2 bonus apiece if you have Naturalist, Tracking or Survival (Woodlands) skills at 12 or higher. You also receive a +2 bonus for each of these *Plot Words*, if you have them: VALIANT or MAJESTIC.

If you succeed, turn to 117.

If you fail, and if you have the *Plot Word* COURAGEOUS, turn to 32.

If you fail but don't have that *Plot Word*, turn to 166.

**205** In the darkness, it takes an interminable amount of time to locate the shaman's cabin. You curse, knowing that every moment of delay could cost Aquilonia a battle.

Your *Plot Word* is FREEBOOTER.

Turn to 120.

**206** Apply a -3 penalty to all further Morale rolls required in this battle. Turn to 72.

**207** You are almost on it before you find it, standing in the deepest gloom between two giant oaks in a glade feebly lit by a few dots of moonlight. Your nerves tingle in the presence of magic, like those of a jungle beast in the presence of unknown danger.

If your *Plot Word* is STRONG or DAUNTLESS, turn to 122.

If your *Plot Word* is TRIUMPHANT, turn to 84.

In all other cases, turn to 218.

**208** "My children," begins the Aquilonian, "your great and loyal friend, General Viscount Lucian, is not one whose words are straw. He said he would betray a company of troops into your hands, and did he not? Even so, when he promises you all of Schohira as well, he will not fail you."

Turn to 36.

**209** You run from the great beast, but it follows at incredible speed, leaping over the forest floor on all fours. Looking back, you see the eyes gleaming like red coals against the stygian darkness of the woods.

Roll a Quick Contest of Move scores, to see if you can outrun your pursuer. His stats are given on p. 29 of the appendix.

If you win, turn to 37.

Otherwise, the ape catches you — return to 75.





**210** The others manhandle a large, bulky object out of the craft. The four, using a pole, hoist the load to their shoulders and follow the fifth shoreward along the pier. You recognize the buckskins of Aquilonian scouts.

You leap out in front of them, readying your weapon. "Stand, or you're dead men," you grate.

Use Combat Map B. You are at CC. Flavius is at F, Laodamas is at L, and Glyco is at G — they are crouching. Four Oriskonie Scouts are at positions S1 through S4, the chest is at X, and Edric of Oriskonie is at S5.

Begin the battle. Because of the dim moonlight, there is a -5 penalty to all combat rolls. The strangers are stunned, and cannot take any action other than to defend themselves until they succeed at a Will roll. The roll may be attempted at the end of every combat round. Once they have their wits about them, they will head for the boat and try to cast off — which they do on any turn when at least half of them are in the boat.

If you are killed, *your adventure is over*.

If you and the other officers flee the battle, turn to 172.

If any stranger is captured or killed, make a note of this paragraph's number, and then turn to 123.

If all the strangers are dead, captured, or cast off, turn to 38.

**211** The battle is a total victory. You lead your tired soldiers back in triumph to their barracks in Velitrium.

Turn to 126.

**212** "But, sir, the general has not yet risen," explains the sentry.

"Fetch him anyway," you insist. "This matter brooks no delay."

Try another Quick Contest of ST, again adding your rank of captain (4) as a modifier. The sentry's ST is 14.

If you lose again, turn to 125.

If you win by 3 or more points, turn to 174.

In any other case, turn to 40.

**213** Suddenly, from the woods ahead bursts a blood-streaked figure. You recognize him as one of the archers Flavius sent out to scout.

"Savages!" yells the Bossonian, running at full tilt for the safety of the column. "We're surrounded!"

"Form square for attack!" you roar. "Archers, hold your fire until you see your targets plain." A chorus of yells from the trees ahead half drowns your words.

Turn to 41.

**214** As the sun begins to set, the first Picts appear across the meadow, yelling defiance and brandishing their weapons. More pour out of the forest, until the low ground is thronged with naked, painted men.

"We are outnumbered here as much as in our last battle," murmurs Flavius.

Consult Force Roster B, on p. 31. If your *Plot Word* is INVINCIBLE, add the surviving totals from Force Roster A to your score.

If your *Plot Word* is INDESTRUCTIBLE, subtract from your totals the factors representing Laodamas' cavalry.

When you are ready, turn to 195.

**215** You gather the other officers together, just out of earshot of your men. "That racket no doubt means that our old friend Zogar Sag will be directing the next attack," you whisper.

Your co-captain's eyes narrow. "If our men suspect sorcery's afoot . . ."

You shrug. "Anyone who wars with the Picts, fights sorcery. It's the natural condition of the frontier."

Turn to 130.

**216** You half crouch, the flesh prickling along your spine. It isn't Flavius who emerges from the other side of the glade. The creature is gnarled and misshapen, in the form of a man but greater in its bulk. Thick fur covers its body, and it has the chinless, low-browed head of an ape. Its hands, stretched toward you, are armed with long black talons.

It halts some feet away and you glare at it, trying to fathom its purposes.

Turn to 129.

**217** A shrill cry penetrates the evening air — the savages have spotted you!

"Run for it, lad," you advise your companion, pumping your legs for all they can give. "Zogar Sag is not known to be charitable to Aquilonian spies . . ."

You hear behind you a hideous howling, whose blood-mad fury is enough to freeze the blood of even a soldier like yourself. Then comes silence, but you know that the Picts must be ranging like wolves through the dark forest, spreading in a vast semicircle and combing it as they run.

Cross out three of the boxes below. Then roll a Contest of Moves — yours and your companion's (use the lowest score) versus the Picts' score of 6.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

If you win, cross off one of the boxes above.

If you lose, erase the cross-out from one of the boxes above.

When all of the boxes are crossed off, you escape — turn to 179.

If there are no marks to erase, the Picts catch up with you — turn to 45.

If you decide to abandon your companion to the savages, turn immediately to 132 for further instructions.

Otherwise, continue further Contests of Moves.

**218** A figure emerges from the other side of the glade. The creature is gnarled and misshapen, in the form of a man but greater in its bulk. Thick fur covers its body, and it has the chinless, low-browed head of an ape. Its hands, stretched toward you, are armed with long black talons.

It is a *chaken*. Stats for it are given on p. 29. Its preferred method of fighting is to get into Close Combat with its victims, choking or strangling them.

Turn to 46.

**219** "That chest is the key," you explain. "Lucian's the traitor — I can't prove that, but it's what I believe."

Laodamas clutches his chest. "Mutiny . . ." he mutters.

Turn to 134.

**220** "I will not!" says the officer. "To charge an unprepared enemy is unknighthly conduct."

"Ass!" you exclaim.

If you pull rank on Laodamas, turn to 182.

If you physically assault him, turn to 133.

If you decide to forego this charge, turn to 144 (if you have the *Plot Word* REBEL) or to 57 (if you don't have this *Plot Word*).



# APPENDIX

## Character Points

Surviving this adventure is worth 4 character points, plus or minus the modifier shown for each of the following *Plot Words*:

ADVENTURER	+1	INVINCIBLE	+2
BOLD	-1	REBEL	+1
CIMMERIA	-2	WARLORD	+1

In the original story, Conan earned 5 points — four for completing the adventure, plus bonuses for REBEL and WARLORD, minus the penalty for BOLD.

However, if King Numedides confirmed your rank as general (Rank 5), five points of your increase must go toward paying for your improved military status.

## Designing Heroes

This adventure, meant for the mighty Conan, is more than a match for most 100-point characters. Therefore, the player may spend up to 300 points for his player character.

Other requirements:

**Military Rank.** All PCs must hold the rank of captain in the Frontier Guard of Aquilonia. Rank 4; 20 points. This advantage provides one free level of Social Status, plus a +1 reaction bonus from those of lower rank as well as from the residents of the frontier.

**Duty.** All PCs also have the disadvantage of Duty (Aquilonian army, 15 or less).

**Some Suggested Advantages:** Acute Hearing or Vision, Literacy, Strong Will, Toughness.

**Some Suggested Skills:** Acting, Area Knowledge (Westermarck), Bard, Brawling, Detect Lies, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Interrogation, Leadership, Naturalist, Politics, Psychology, Running, Stealth, Strategy, Streetwise, Survival (Woodlands), Tactics, Tracking, and all combat skills.

## Character Background

Possible backgrounds for your Hyborian PC include:

**Aquilonian noble.** Most nobles in the Aquilonian army disdain command of irregular troops as scouts. Thus, a PC who is an Aquilonian nobleman would be unusual for his breed. Aquilonians have strict notions of honor and right, according to a code of chivalry. Recommended skills and advantages: Social Status; Wealth; Savoir-Faire; Area Knowledge (Aquilonia).

**Aquilonian warrior.** Typical troops of Aquilonia include Gundermen, a race of tough, blond soldiers who favor sword, pike and chainmail; and Bossonians, a short, swarthy people legendary for archery. Recommended skills and advantages: Area Knowledge (Aquilonia); Streetwise; Leadership; Tactics.

**Barbarian mercenary.** Just like Conan, your character could be a moneyfighter from a less-civilized nation. Good candidates for a homeland include Cimmeria, Vanaheim and Asgard. Many barbarians suffer from Social Stigma (see p. B19),

though well-traveled barbarians — such as Conan — may have their rough edges smoothed over. Recommended skills and advantages: Alertness; Survival; Naturalist; Toughness.

**Civilized mercenary.** The countries of Ophir, Argos and Zingara are all good homelands for mercenaries. Recommended skills and advantages: Combat Reflexes; High Pain Threshold; Area Knowledge (Hyboria); several languages.

**Frontiersman.** There are two types of woodsmen in Conajohara province: veteran settlers, who come from almost any background and have developed fighting and survival skills from harsh experience against the Picts; and the Tauran, an Aquilonian people who have a tradition of woodlore but not of practical combat. Recommended skills and ad-

vantages: Animal Empathy; Danger Sense; Naturalist; Tracking.

**Half-breed Pict.** A half-Pict certainly has survival and combat skills. Being a half-breed, however, is a -15 point Social Stigma in Aquilonia. Recommended skills and advantages: Alertness; Combat Reflexes; Survival; Pictish language.

**Female characters.** Due to the strict chivalrous notions of Aquilonia, being a female warrior will be a struggle — probably the only military command possible for a woman is over scouts and irregulars. A woman warrior carries a Social Stigma (Second-Class Citizen) among Aquilonians, suffering a -1 on all reaction rolls. Recommended skills and advantages: As appropriate to character's background as described above.

## The Picts

The majority of your foes in this adventure will be the savage tribesmen of Pictland. The following information will help you run the Picts you encounter.

### Pict Tactics

The Picts are a fierce and aggressive people, with no love for civilized men. Furthermore, this adventure takes place in former Pictish territory, only recently conquered by Aquilonia. For these reasons, unless the text indicates otherwise, the Picts will attack whenever they are encountered, closing for melee combat and fighting to the death.

### Pict Tribes

If the adventure calls for a Pict but doesn't mention his tribe, roll one die and consult the table below. Stats for typical tribe members are given on p. 29. Unless stated otherwise, assume all Picts in the party are from the same tribe.

1	Hawk	4	Wolf
2	Turtle	5	Ferret
3	Raven	6	Otter

## Rules for Mass Combat

The *GURPS* Mass Combat System is not designed to play out the details of a long battle. Instead, it gives a quick answer to the most important questions in terms of roleplaying — *who won?* and *what happened to the adventurers?*

### “Battle” Skill

Battle Skill is a special score, used only in the Mass Combat System. A character's Battle Skill score is the average of his Tactics skill (defaulting to IQ at -6) and the skill for the weapon he is using in this battle. The Battle scores for most of the NPCs in this adventure are given on the appropriate Force Roster in the appendix.

### Survival Rolls

Survival rolls are part of the Mass Combat System, and are made to discover whether a character survives a battle. Three dice are rolled, and compared against the Battle Score of the character. Depending on the result, the character will suffer a varying amount of battle damage — see the table below.

#### Survival Roll Result

Made roll by 5 or more points  
Made roll by 1-4 points  
Made roll exactly

#### Injury\*

No damage  
1 hit of damage  
2 hits of damage

Failed roll by 1 or 2 points	1d + 1 damage
Failed roll by 3 to 4 points	2 wounds, 1d damage each
Failed roll by 5 to 6 points	2 wounds, 2d damage each
Failed roll by 7 or more points	3 wounds, 2d damage each

\* Take the damage directly from HT, deducting for Toughness but not for armor.

The player may decide to apply any modifier, from +6 to -6, to the Survival roll. However, the exact opposite modifier must also be applied to the same character's next Glory roll (see below).

For a full explanation of the *GURPS* Mass Combat System, see *GURPS Conan*, *GURPS Horseclans* or *GURPS Japan*.

### Glory Rolls

Glory rolls are part of the Mass Combat System, and are made to discover whether a character's individual combat affects the larger battle of which he is a part. Three dice are rolled, and compared against the Battle Score of the character. The result determines the effect on the upcoming Battle Contest — see the table on next page.

## Glory Roll Result

## Contest Modifier\*

Critical Success	+2
Made roll by 7 to 9 points	+1
Made roll by 4 to 6 points	+1
Made roll by 1 to 3 points	+0
Made roll exactly	+0
Failed roll by 1 to 3 points	+0
Failed roll by 4 to 6 points	-1
Failed roll by 7 or more	-3
Critical Failure	-3

\* This modifier is applied to your force commander's Battle Contest roll.

## Continuing *Beyond Thunder River*

*Moon of Blood* is a continuation of the situation presented in *Beyond Thunder River*. If you have played *Beyond Thunder River*, you may use the same character in this adventure — but of course you can play and enjoy *Moon of Blood* on its own.

If you have not played *Beyond Thunder River*, do not read the following!

**The Fate of Tuscelan.** If you saved Fort Tuscelan from the Picts, then you cannot play this adventure — you did better than Conan did in the stories, and prevented further Pict incursions!

**Character Sheet Changes.** The version of Conan used in *Beyond Thunder River* was very different from the final version presented in *GURPS Conan*. An updated character sheet is given on p. 32. Of course, if you wish to continue using the same character you used in *Beyond Thunder River*, you may certainly do so.

Either way, you may spend the earned character points for completing *Beyond Thunder River* to upgrade your character's skills and abilities, plus an additional 3 points earned in the border skirmishes since then. He retains the same military rank, although he now commands a company of Bossonian archers rather than the scouts from Fort Tuscelan.

**Plot Words.** Your Plot Words, if you kept a

## Morale Rolls

To make a Morale roll, roll three dice and compare the result against the military unit's Morale score (listed on the appropriate Force Roster in the appendix). If you roll equal to or less than the score, the unit passes its morale check; otherwise, it fails and becomes demoralized. The demoralized men continue to fight, but as more and more units become demoralized, there is a growing chance that the entire force will turn tail and rout.

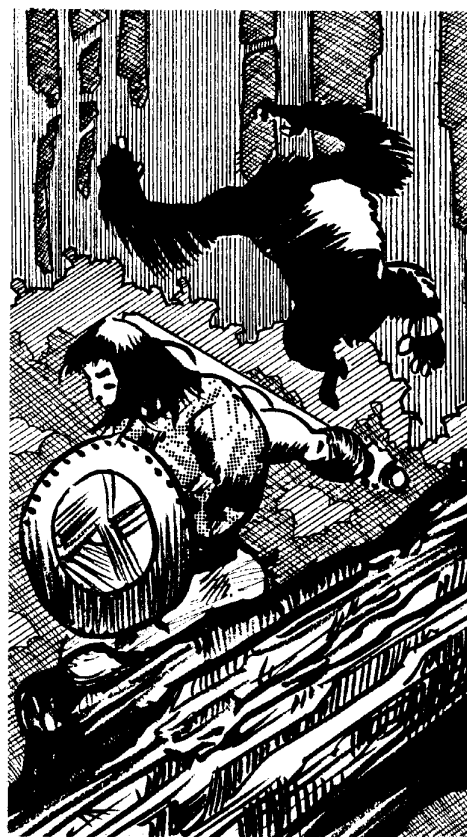
record of them after completing *Beyond Thunder River*, will be used again in this adventure. If you cannot remember what they were, examine the list below to see which ones seem most likely:

If you know anything about a traitor at Fort Tuscelan, then your Plot Word is VALOROUS; if not, you have the Plot Word is BRAVE. All PCs must have one of these two Plot Words.

If your men were taken prisoner by the Picts, you have the Plot Word HEROIC.

If you encountered Tiberias in the woods (dead or alive), then you either fought an ape-like chiken (your Plot Word is MIGHTY), a fiery being (Plot Word TRIUMPHANT), or were bitten by a snake (Plot Word STRONG). If you didn't rescue Tiberias, roll one die — on a roll of 1 or 2, your Plot Word is MIGHTY; 3 or 4, TRIUMPHANT; 5 or 6, STRONG. PCs must have one of these Plot Words.

If you wounded Zogar Sag (the Pict wizard), you have the Plot Words MAGNIFICENT and INTREPID. If you shot Zogar Sag but his wounds healed magically, your Plot Word is DAUNTLESS. If you receive neither of these Plot Words, roll one die — on a roll of 1 to 4, your Plot Word is DAUNTLESS; on 5 or 6, it is INTREPID. All PCs must have one of these two Plot Words.



## MAP KEY

### Combat Map A

**Trees** are shown by a dark circle, indicating the trunk, and a shaded areas, showing the climbable branches and area of shade. Characters may walk under the branches, but not through the trunk!

**Bushes** are about a yard high. It costs double to move through a bush hex. Thirty seconds work with a sharp sword will clear this hex.

### Combat Map B

**Thunder River** Characters may only move through one river hex per turn, and a DX roll is required. Characters standing in the river are three feet lower than those in the mud or on boats, and six feet lower than those on the pier. Anyone jumping or falling into a river hex must make a Swimming roll, as described below.

Characters failing their DX roll lose their balance, and must make a Swimming roll. Failing this roll means that the character takes 1 point of

Fatigue, flounders 1 hex in a random direction, and must try a new Swimming roll next turn. A character who succeeds at the Swimming roll remains in the hex, but can take no other action this turn.

**The Old Fish House's** walls and doors are DR 2, 10 hit points. The doors are originally closed, but not locked.

**Crates** are one-yard stacks of wooden packing materials. Characters may stand on them, but they are a precarious perch — a DX roll is required every turn to remain standing, at -3 penalty. Twenty hits of damage will reduce a stack to kindling.

**The Boats** are three feet lower than the pier, and pitch and roll with the river. All DX rolls are at -1 while on a boat. Characters who fall or jump down from the pier must make a special DX roll to avoid falling overboard; if one character falls, all characters in the same boat must also make DX rolls to avoid falling. The boats are DR 2, 10 hits.

**The Mud** is three feet lower than the pier and the crates' platform (they are on stilts). Moving through mud costs an additional one point per hex. Falling in mud does no damage.

**The Chest** is dropped at the start of combat. It weighs 700 lbs. Attached to it is a long pole, extending from S1 to S4 — lifting the chest by this pole counts as "carry on back" (see p. B89). The chest is unlocked.

### Combat Map C

**The Stairs** are steep — each stair hex is one foot lower for every hex in the "down" direction. Running down the stairs requires a DX roll to avoid falling. Movement up the stairs reduces that turn's movement by one hex.

**The grassy Slope** is as steep as the stairs (see above), and more difficult to negotiate. Going up the slope is limited to one hex per turn; moving any other direction requires a DX roll at -5 penalty, to remain standing.

**The Chest** is the same from Combat Map B (see above).

**The Villa** cannot be entered during the fight. The door is locked.

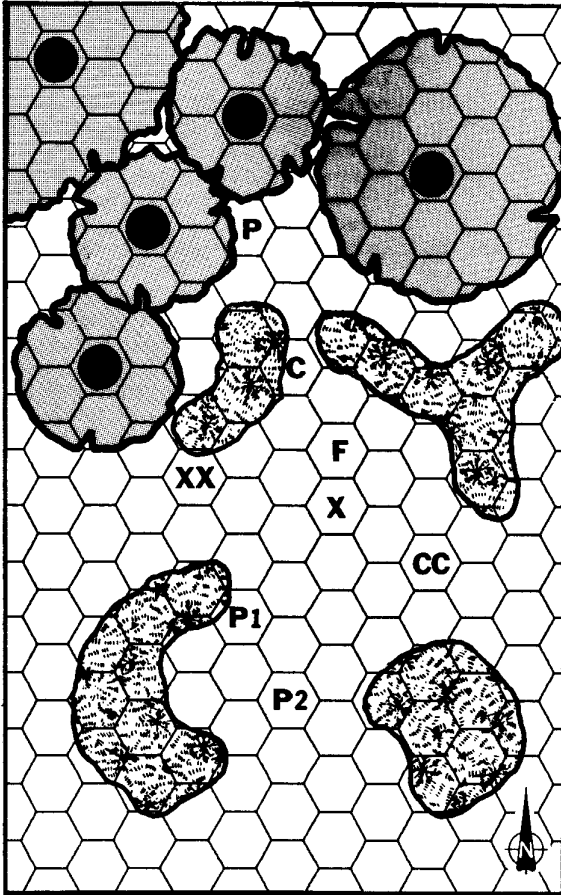
**Miscellaneous objects:** There is a small wooden stool at V and a shaving basin at G.

### Combat Map D

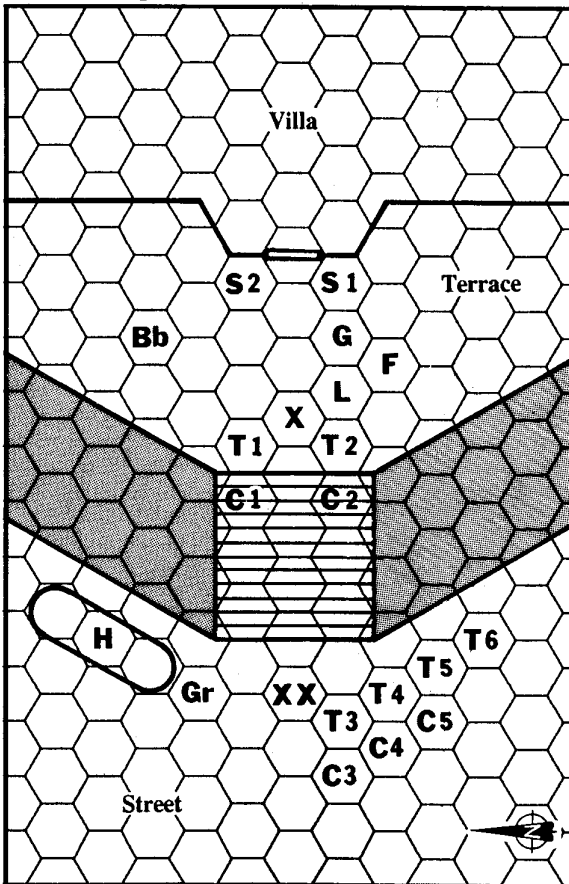
Characters inside the tent and adjacent to the walls must crouch.

**The Fire** has burned down to coals — characters who step in that hex take 1 hit of damage, unless they are wearing footwear of DR 2 or better.

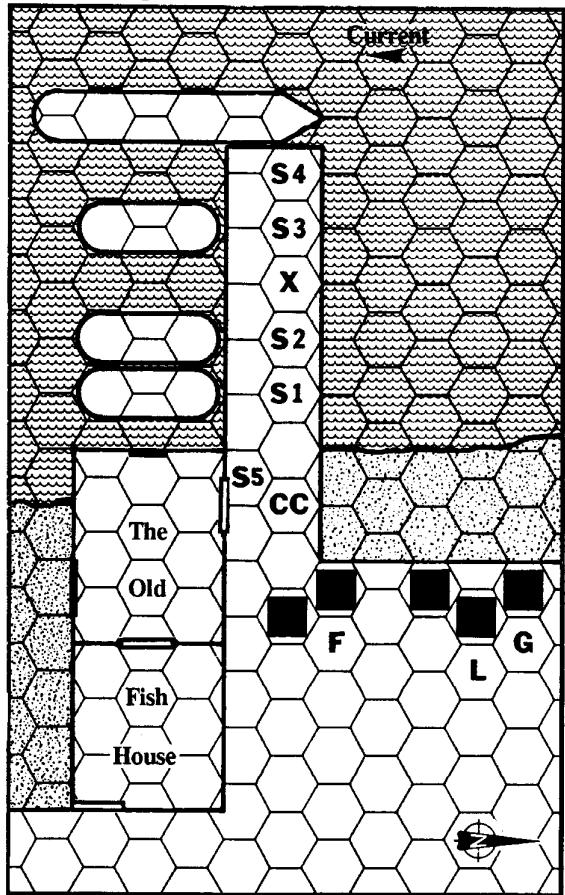
Combat Map A



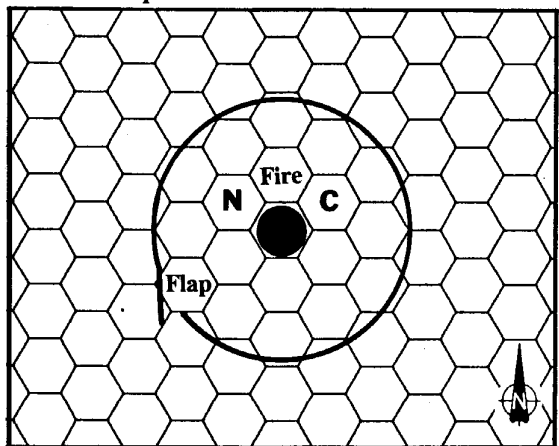
Combat Map C



Combat Map B



Combat Map D



Map Key		Crates	
Slope		Mud	
Window		Bushes	
Door		Trees	

1 Hex = 1 Yard

# NPC Characters and Creatures

## Flavius of Aquilonia

21 years old; well-built, blond youth of medium height who seems clumsy and nervous. 100 points.

ST 13; DX 13; IQ 12; HT 11

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 4 (light encumbrance)

Dodge 5; Parry 7; Block 5

Advantages: Acute Hearing (+4), Literate, Military Rank (Lieutenant, 3), Status (1).

Disadvantages: Duty (Aquilonian army, 15 or less), Gullibility, Stuttering.

Quirks: Acts awkward, Nervous in woods, Admires nobility.

Skills: Area Knowledge (Tarantia)-11, Axe/Mace-8, Battle-12, Bow-12, Brawling-13, Broadsword-12, Knife-9, Leadership-10, Riding-12, Shield-15, Shortsword-14, Strategy-5, Tactics-11.

Language: Aquilonian-9.

Armor: Steel Breastplate (PD 4, DR 5, torso only), Leather Helm (PD 2, DR 2, head only), Heavy Leather Boots (PD 2, DR 2, feet only), Heavy Leather Breeches (PD 2, DR 2, legs only), Buckler (PD 1, 5/20 hits).

Weapons: Shortsword (2d-1 cut, 1d imp); Regular bow (1d+1 imp, 10 arrows); Small knife (2d-4 cut, 1d-2 imp).



## Captain Laodamas

23 years old; tall, noble-born officer with shoulder-length wavy blond hair. 85 points.

ST 11; DX 13; IQ 14; HT 9

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 4 (light encumbrance)

Dodge 4; Parry 6

Advantages: Acute Taste and Smell (+1), Handsome, Literate, Military Rank (Captain, 4), Status (Patrician, 1), Wealth (Comfortable).

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Chivalric), Duty (Aquilonian army, 15 or less), Fanaticism (Feudalism), Jealousy, Odious Personal Habit (Foppish).

Quirk: Likes to argue.

Skills: Area Knowledge (Aquilonia)-13, Axe/Mace-12, Battle-12, Brawling-12, Broadsword-12, Knife-9, Lance-12, Leadership-6, Politics-12, Riding-12, Shortsword-11, Strategy-11, Tactics-12, Two-Handed Sword-13.

Language: Aquilonian-14.

Armor: Chainmail (PD 3, DR 4 normally, PD 1, DR 2 versus impaling weapons; torso and head only), Heavy Leather Boots (PD 2, DR 2, feet only), Cloth Armor (PD 1, DR 1, legs only).

Weapons: Thrusting broadsword (1d+2 cut, 1d+1 imp); Axe (1d+3 cut); Small knife (1d-2 cut, 1d-2 imp).

## Captain Glyco

42 years old; Glyco is a heavy-set man with a grizzled beard and a battle-scarred face. 120 points.

ST 14; DX 11; IQ 10; HT 10

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 3 (medium encumbrance)

Dodge 3; Parry 6

Advantages: Ambidexterity, Common Sense, Military Rank (Captain, 4), Status (Officer, 1), Toughness (2)

Disadvantages: Appearance (Unattractive), Duty (Aquilonian army, 15 or less), Sense of Duty (to his men, 15 or less)

Skills: Axe/Mace-11, Battle-11, Brawling-12, Broadsword-10, Diplomacy-10, Knife-7, Leadership-12, Polearm-10, Riding-10, Shield-12, Shortsword-12, Strategy-4, Tactics-10.

Language: Aquilonian-10.

Armor: Mail Shirt (PD 3, DR 4 normally, PD 1, DR 2 versus impaling weapons, torso and arms only); Steel cap (PD 3, DR 4, head only); Heavy leather boots (PD 2, DR 2, feet only); Polished leg pieces (PD 2, DR 2, legs only); Small shield (PD 2, 5/30 hits).

Weapons: Shortsword (2d cut, 1d imp); Axe (2d+2 cut); Small knife (2d-3 cut, 1d-1 imp).

## Edric of Oriskonie

36 years old; a lean man, whose brown skin is seamed by thousands of wrinkles. 90 points.

ST 10; DX 15; IQ 10; HT 12

Basic Speed 8.125; Move 8 (no encumbrance)

Dodge 8; Parry 7

Advantages: Absolute Direction, Alertness (+2), Combat Reflexes, Peripheral Vision.

Disadvantage: Duty (Governor Lucian, 15 or less), Intolerance (Nobility), Paranoia, Poverty (Struggling).

Skills: Axe/Mace-14, Boating-10, Bow-14, Brawling-15, Broadsword-12; Fast-Draw (Arrow)-14, Knife-14, Knife Throwing-15, Riding-10, Running-11, Shortsword-14, Stealth-15, Survival (Woods)-10, Swimming-11, Tracking-10.

Language: Aquilonian-10.

Armor: Buckskin (light leather — PD 1, DR 1).

Weapons: Regular bow (1d-1 imp); Quiver (20 arrows); Hunting falchion (Sword — 1d cut, 1d-2 imp); Hatchet (1d cut); Four small knives (1d-3 cut, 1d-3 imp).

## Viscount General Lucian

46 years old; a short, mustached, stocky man of middle age, whose once well-developed muscles have grown flabby. 130 points.

ST 11; DX 12; IQ 15; HT 9

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 6 (no encumbrance)

Dodge 6

Advantages: Combat Reflexes, Literacy, Military Rank (General, Rank 5), Status (Viscount, 3), Status (Governor, 3), Wealth (Comfortable).

Disadvantages: Bully, Compulsive Behavior (Gambling — in great debt due to it), Jealousy, Overweight, Vow (Revenge on Lord Thasperas)

Quirks: Loves to ride, Shaves daily, Fastidious about moustache.

Skills: Administration-13, Area Knowledge (Westermarck)-14, Axe/Mace-11, Axe Throwing-12, Brawling-13, Broadsword-11, Carousing-11, Crossbow-13, Dancing-11, Flail-11, Gambling-13, Knife-11, Leadership-13, Politics-13, Psychology-13, Riding-13, Running-8, Shortsword-10, Sleight of Hand-11, Strategy-14, Tactics-13, Two-Handed Sword-12.

Language: Aquilonian-10.

Armor: Elegant breeches (no PD, DR); Riding boots (PD 2, DR 2, feet only). Torso, head and arms are bare.

Weapons: Riding Crop (as baton: 1d+1 cr).

## Zogar Sag

48 years old; lean figure of medium height, hideous and malevolent face. 150 points.

ST 10; DX 12; IQ 16; HT 9

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 5 (no encumbrance)

Dodge 5; Parry 5

Advantages: Animal Empathy, Clerical Investment (+3, all animal spells), Magical Aptitude, Reputation (+3, from frontier Picts), Status (Shaman War Chief, 2), Unusual Background, Voice.

Disadvantages: Appearance (Hideous), Duty (Son of Jhebbel Sag, 9 or less), Fanaticism (Reconquer the Westermarck), Intolerance (Hyborians), Megalomania, Social Stigma (Barbarian), Stubbornness.

Skills: Area Knowledge (Pict frontier)-15, Axe/Mace-11, Axe Throwing-11, Bow-11, Brawling-11, Dancing-12, Knife-11, Knife Throwing-13, Leadership-15, Occultism-14, Politics-14, Spells (vary, depending on Plot Word in play), Strategy-8, Tactics-8.

Language: Pictish-16.

Armor: Harness of copper and leather with ostrich plumes (PD 1, DR 0, torso and abdomen only).

Weapons: Two ceremonial knives (1d-3 imp, not throwable); Ceremonial rattle (as club: 1d+2 cr); Ceremonial bone whistle (as baton: 1d cr, 4/6 chance of breaking after use to attack or parry).

## Aquilonian Cavalryman

Typical Frontier Guards cavalryman. 55 points.

ST 12; DX 13; IQ 9; HT 12

Basic Speed 6.25; Move 4 (medium encumbrance)

Dodge 4; Parry 6

Disadvantages: Duty (Aquilonian army, 15 or less).

Skills: Axe/Mace-12, Brawling-12, Broadsword-13, Carousing-12, Knife-12, Lance-13, Riding-13, Shortsword-11, Two-Handed Sword-12.

Language: Aquilonian-9.

Armor: Chainmail (PD 3, DR 4 normally, PD 1, DR 2 versus impaling weapons; torso, abdomen, limbs and head); Heavy leather boots (PD 2, DR 2, feet only); Leather gloves (PD 2, DR 2).

Weapons: Thrusting broadsword (1d+3 cut, 1d+1 imp); Axe (1d+4 cut); Large knife (1d cut, 1d-1 imp).

## Gunderman Pikeman

Compactly built, fair skin and **steely eyes, blond hair** cut square. 60 points.

ST 13; DX 13; IQ 9; HT 12

Basic Speed 7.875; Move 5 (**medium encumbrance**) Dodge 5; Parry 6; Block 4

Disadvantages: Duty (Aquilonian army, **15 or less**), Poverty (Struggling).

Skills: Axe/Mace-13, Brawling-12, **Broadsword-11**, Carousing-12, Knife-15, **Polearm-12**, **Running-11**, **Shortsword-13**, **Shield-12**, **Spear-13**.

Language: Aquilonian-9.

Armor: Chainmail (PD 3, DR 4 normally, **PD 1, DR 2** versus impaling weapons; **torso and arms**); Steel cap (PD 3, DR 4, head only); **Polished leg pieces** (PD 2, DR 2, legs only); **Heavy leather boots** (PD 2, DR 2, feet only); **Small shield** (PD 2, 5/30 hits).

Weapons: Shortsword (2d-1 cut, 1d imp); Axe (2d+1 cut); Six daggers (1d-1 imp).

## Oriskonie Scouts

Lean, hardy men from Oriskonie province of the northern Westernmark. 90 points.

ST 11; DX 14; IQ 13; HT 10

Basic Speed 6; Move 6 (no encumbrance)

Dodge 6; Parry 7

Advantages: Alertness (+2), Toughness (DR 1).

Disadvantages: Duty (Governor Lucian, 15 or less), Poverty (Struggling).

Skills: Axe/Mace-13, Axe Throwing-14, Boating-9, Bow-13, Brawling-13, Broadsword-11; Knife-10, Running-9, Shortsword-13, Stealth-13, Survival (Woods)-11, Swimming-10, Tracking-12.

Armor: Buckskin (light leather — PD 1, DR 1).

Weapons: Regular bow (1d-1 imp); Quiver (20 arrows); Hunting falchion (Shortsword — 1d cut, 1d-2 imp); Hatchet (1d cut); Four small knives (1d-3 cut, 1d-3 imp).

## Picts

Mid-20s; short and swarthy.

ST 13; DX 12; IQ 9; HT 10

Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5 (No armor, no encumbrance)

Dodge 6; Parry 7

Advantages: Acute Hearing +3; Night Vision.

Disadvantages: Impulsiveness; Fanaticism (Reclaim lost tribal lands); Poverty (Poor); Social Stigma (Barbarian).

Skills: Fast-Draw (Knife)-12; Knife-14; Running-12; Stealth-14; Survival (Woods)-12; Tracking-14.

Equipment: Large knife.

The statistics above are a composite. Each tribe of Picts differs slightly:

**Hawk Tribe.** ST -1, HT +1; Speed 6; Move 6; Dodge 6; Parry 6; Bow-13, Fast-Draw (Arrow)-12; Shortsword-15; Short bow with ten arrows, 1d-1 impaling; Shortsword, 1d+2 cutting, 1d-1 impaling. Large knife does 1d cutting, 1d-1 impaling.

**Wolf Tribe.** Basic Speed 5.5; Move 5; Dodge 5; Parry 6; Spear-12; Throwing-13; Carries four javelins (1+1 impaling). Large knife does 2d-3 cutting, 1d impaling.

**Turtle Tribe.** ST +1, DX -2, HT +1; Basic Speed 5.25; Knife Throwing-11; Shortsword-11; Shortsword (2d cut, 1d impale). Large knife does 2d-2 cutting, 1d impaling.

**Ferret Tribe.** ST -2, DX +1, HT +1; Basic Speed 6; Move 5; Dodge 5; Parry 5; Bow-15; Fast-Draw (Arrow)-12; Regular bow with ten arrows (1d impaling). Large knife does 1d-1 cutting, 1d-1 impaling.

**Raven Tribe.** ST -2, DX +2, IQ +1, HT +1; Basic Speed 6.25; Move 6; Dodge 6; Parry 7; Axe/Mace-15; Axe Throwing-17; Two hatchets (1d+2 cutting). Large knife does 1d-1 cutting, 1d-1 impaling.

**Otter Tribe.** ST -2, DX +2, IQ -1, HT -1; Basic Speed 5.75; Axe/Mace-15; Bow-15; Short bow with ten arrows (1d-1 impaling); Hatchet (1d+1 cutting). Large knife does 1d-1 cutting, 1d-1 impaling.

# Animals and Other Entities

## Chaken

ST: 16-18

DX: 14

IQ: 6

HT: 14/16-18

Speed/Dodge: 10/6

PD/DR: 1/1

Damage: 1d cut (claw)

Reach: C

Size: 1

Weight: 200-400 lbs.

Origin: SF

Habitat: Jungle, Mountain

The chaken is vaguely manlike in form, with gnarled, misshapen limbs and a bulky body. It is covered in thick fur. The beast has the chinless, low-browed head of an ape, tapering to a furry peak. Its hands are armed with long black talons. It has flaming red eyes.

These sub-humans have a powerful sense of smell, allowing them to track through the most tangled woods (Smell-16). Pictish shamans sometimes tame young chakens for use as bloodhounds and assassins.

Chaken dwell in nomadic troops of 30-50, dominated by the largest bulls. Fortunately, the beasts dislike men and avoid their settlements.

Some scholars contend that chaken are semi-intelligent. According to some reports, the elusive beasts sometimes adopt ruined structures as holy sites and defend them against all comers.

## Scavenger from the Mountain of the Dead

ST: 13

DX: 11

IQ: 8

HT: 14/16-20 (18)

Speed/Dodge: 5/5

PD/DR: 3/2

Damage: horns, 2d-1 cut#

Reach: C,1

Size: 1

Weight: 200-300 lbs.

Origin: SF

Habitat: Mountain

Protectors of Gullah's altar on the Mountain of the Dead, these man-like beings are mute and can

see in the dark (ignore penalties for darkness). They attack with their skull horns, and may slash (treat as a normal weapon attack) or gore (requires a successful *slam* attack, and does 1d+1 impaling damage — no stun recovery roll is needed).

## Pict Ape

ST: 20-24 (24)

Damage: bite, 1d cut;

slap, 1d+1 crushing;

strangling #

DX: 13

Reach: C

IQ: 6

Size: 1-2

HT: 12-14

Weight: 200-600 lbs.

Speed/Dodge: 5/5

Origin: SF

PD/DR: 1/1

Habitat: Jungle, Mountain

These large primates are known throughout Pictland, while related species are common throughout Hyboria. The male is the "bull ape."

Bull apes compete for dominance over troops. Patriarchs must often contend with challenges from troopless bulls — the resulting combat is violent, quick and decisive.

Most dangerous to travelers are those bulls too young or too old to hold a troop. Young bulls are solitary, often seeking combat against adventurers who trespass within the ape's territory. Old bulls act similarly, and are often insane.

Bulls attack by grappling their victims, and then repeatedly biting (1d cutting damage). They may also attack with a slap (1d+1 crushing up to 1-hex reach — rarely done) or by strangling.

Picts avoid slaying these apes; they consider them sacred to the *Hairy One Who Lives on the Moon*, the gorilla-god of Gullah. Occasionally the Picts will train these apes for religious rites.

## Swamp Devil

ST: 12

DX: 16

IQ: 8

HT: 12/10

PD/DR: 2/1

Speed/Dodge: 12/8

Damage: claw, 2d-1 cut

Reach: C,1,2

Size: 1

Weight: 120 lbs.

Origin: SF

Habitat: Jungle, Swamp

The swamp devil, or swamp demon, is a mysterious creature, common in certain swamps of Pictland. These creatures are never seen in daylight — yet at the instant of nightfall, the air of the swamp is filled with their horrendous caterwauling.

Tall as a man, a swamp devil's upper anatomy is humanoid, but from waist down it is birdlike. A flickering glow envelopes it like a billowing cloud or cloak, dazzling enemies and concealing its limbs. For this reason, swamp devils are -1 to be hit.

Legends tell of swamp devils changing into vapor, and talking (even mimicking others). It is whispered that Pict shamans tame individual swamp devils.

## The Viscount's Charger

ST: 30

DX: 9

IQ: 4

HT: 12-14

Speed/Dodge: 18/9

PD/DR: 0/0

Damage: 1d cr#

Reach: C,1

Size: 3

Weight: 800-1,100 lbs.

Origin: R

Viscount Lucian's mount is the fastest horse in the Westernmark. It can kick into any front or rear hex for the listed damage, or bite in Close Combat for 2 hits of crushing damage. However, this is a show horse, not a battle mount — it will attack only to defend itself and its rider.

# FORCE ROSTERS

## Force Roster A

### Aquilonians' Force Roster

Military Size: Two Half-Companies

Type: Heavy Inf. (Gunderman Pikemen) and Light Inf. (Bossonian Archers)

#### Unit Type TS Cav+ Msl+ Morale

##### Primus Half-Company (platoon) of Archers:

Red File:

Squad One:	LI	(3+3)×6=36	+0	+9	17 (Elite)
Squad Two:	LI	(3+3)×6=36	+0	+9	16 (Crack)
Squad Three:	LI	(3+3)×6=36	+0	+9	12 (Green)

Gold File:

Squad One:	LI	(3+3)×6=36	+0	+9	15 (Seasoned)
Squad Two:	LI	(3+3)×6=36	+0	+9	15 (Seasoned)
Squad Three:	LI	(3+3)×6=36	+0	+9	14 (Average)

Green File:

Squad One:	LI	(3+3)×6=36	+0	+9	16 (Crack)
Squad Two:	LI	(3+3)×6=36	+0	+9	15 (Seasoned)
Squad Three:	LI	(3+3)×6=36	+0	+9	15 (Seasoned)

##### Primus Half-Company (platoon) of Pikemen:

Silver File:

Squad One:	HI	5×6=30	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
Squad Two:	HI	5×6=30	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
Squad Three:	HI	5×6=30	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)

Blue File:

Squad One:	HI	5×6=30	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
Squad Two:	HI	5×6=30	+0	+0	14 (Average)
Squad Three:	HI	5×6=30	+0	+0	14 (Average)

Black File:

Squad One:	HI	5×6=30	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
Squad Two:	HI	5×6=30	+0	+0	14 (Average)
Squad Three:	HI	5×6=30	+0	+0	12 (Green)

Totals: 594 +0 +81

### The Aquilonian Officers:

Name and Rank	Battle Skill	Tactics Skill	HT
<b>The Bossonian Archers:</b>			
Captain [player character]	?	?	?
Lieutenant Flavius	12	11	11
Sergeant-Major Tudino (Red File)	13	9	10
Sergeant Stretheus (Squad One)	8	5	11
Sergeant Otho (Squad Two)	9	7	11
Sergeant Insius (Squad Three)	9	5	10
Sergeant-Major Hadran (Gold File)	9	6	10
Sergeant Villi (Squad One)	10	6	10
Sergeant Henrick (Squad Two)	10	6	10
Sergeant Maxius (Squad Three)	10	7	10
Sergeant-Major Gio (Green File)	11	8	10
Sergeant Gault (Squad One)	9	6	10
Sergeant Junia (Squad Two)	13	9	10
Sergeant Frederik (Squad Three)	9	5	10
<b>The Gunderman Pikemen:</b>			
Captain Arno	11	11	13
Lieutenant Antaro	13	9	15
Sergeant-Major Epaccus (Silver File)	9	9	12
Sergeant Georg (Squad One)	9	7	14
Sergeant Oigen (Squad Two)	10	9	13
Sergeant Ionna (Squad Three)	9	6	12
Sergeant-Major Bonia (Blue File)	10	8	13
Sergeant Hanza (Squad One)	9	6	13
Sergeant Jon (Squad Two)	8	5	14
Sergeant Gameus (Squad Three)	9	6	12
Sergeant-Major Eros (Black File)	10	7	12
Sergeant Ciano (Squad One)	9	7	13
Sergeant Hagar (Squad Two)	9	6	13
Sergeant Emilius (Squad Three)	9	6	13

Notes:

Squad = 6 men

File = 3 squads + officer = 19 men

Platoon = 3 files + officer = 58 men

Company = 2 platoons + 2 co-captains = 118 men

Bossonian Longbows = +3 TS, +50% Msl Bonus

### Picts' Force Roster

Military Size: Ten Companies' Worth

Type: Irregular Infantry (Pict warriors)

Unit Type TS Cav+ Msl+ Morale

#### Hawk Tribe:

War Party One:	II	(2+2)×50=200	+0	+25	17 (Elite)
War Party Two:	II	(2+2)×50=200	+0	+25	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Three:	II	(2+2)×50=200	+0	+25	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Four:	II	(2+2)×50=200	+0	+25	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Five:	II	(2+2)×50=200	+0	+25	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Six:	II	(2+2)×50=200	+0	+25	15 (Seasoned)

#### Turtle Tribe:

War Party One:	II	2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Two:	II	2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)

#### Raven Tribe:

War Party One:	II	2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Two:	II	2×50=100	+0	+0	14 (Average)
War Party Three:	II	2×50=100	+0	+0	14 (Average)

#### Wolf Tribe:

War Party One:	II	2×50=100	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
War Party Two:	II	2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Three:	II	2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Four:	II	2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Five:	II	2×50=100	+0	+0	14 (Average)

#### Ferret Tribe:

War Party One:	II	(2+2)×50=200	+0	+50	14 (Average)
War Party Two:	II	(2+2)×50=200	+0	+50	14 (Average)

#### Otter Tribe:

War Party One:	II	(2+2)×50=200	+0	+50	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Two:	II	(2+2)×50=200	+0	+50	14 (Average)

Totals: 3,000 +0 +350

Notes:

Pict Bowmen: +2 TS, mostly -50% Msl Bonus (using bows only until close range)

All Morale scores include +1 bonus for fighting a hereditary foe.





## Force Roster B

### Aquilonians' Force Roster

Military Size: Three Companies (possibly with reinforcements)

Type: Heavy Infantry (Gunderman Pikemen), Heavy Cavalry, Light Infantry (Bossonian Archers)

Unit	Type	TS	Cav+	Msl+	Morale
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#### Flavius' Archers:

Secundus Half-Company (platoon)

Black File	LI (3+3)×19=114	+0	+27	16 (Crack)
Brown File	LI (3+3)×19=114	+0	+27	16 (Crack)
Orange File	LI (3+3)×19=114	+0	+27	12 (Green)

#### Glyco's Gundermen:

Primus Half-Company (platoon)

Red File	HI 5×19=95	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
Yellow File	HI 5×19=95	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
Silver File	HI 5×19=95	+0	+0	14 (Average)

Secundus Half-Company (platoon)

Green File	HI 5×19=95	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
Blue File	HI 5×19=95	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
Brown File	HI 5×19=95	+0	+0	12 (Green)

#### Arno's Gundermen:

Secundus Half-Company (platoon)

Green File	HI 5×19=95	+0	+0	14 (Average)
Red File	HI 5×19=95	+0	+0	14 (Average)
Yellow File	HI 5×19=95	+0	+0	12 (Green)

#### Laodamas' Cavalry Company:

Primus Half-Company (platoon)

Yellow File	HC 8×19=152	+152		
Black File	HC 8×19=152	+152		
Red File	HC 8×19=152	+152		

Secundus Half-Company (platoon)

Orange File	HC 8×19=152	+152	+0	14 (Seasoned)
Blue File	HC 8×19=152	+152	+0	13 (Average)
Silver File	HC 8×19=152	+152	+0	13 (Average)

Totals:	2,109	+912	+81	
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All Morale scores except Heavy Cavalry include +1 bonus for fighting a hereditary foe.

### The Aquilonian Officers:

Name and Rank	Battle Skill	Tactics Skill	HT
General (player character)	?	?	?

#### The Bossonian Archers:

Captain Flavius (brevet)	12	11	11
Lieutenant Casius	12	10	13

#### The Gunderman Pikemen:

Captain Glyco	11	10	10
Lieutenant Josephus	12	10	10
Lieutenant Trodt	11	10	9
Captain Arno	11	11	13
Lieutenant Erminius	11	9	15

#### The Cavalry:

Captain Laodamas	12	12	9
Lieutenant Caretor	8	12	9
Lieutenant Scrutos	13	12	9

Half-Company = 3 files + officer = 58 men

Company = 2 platoons + 1 captain = 118 men

Battalion = 3 companies + 1 general = 355 men

### Picts' Force Roster

Military Size: Twenty Companies' Worth Type: Irregular Infantry (Pict warriors)

Unit	Type	TS	Cav+	Msl+	Morale
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#### Hawk Tribe:

War Party Seven:	II (2+2)×50=200	+0	+25	14 (Average)
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#### Turtle Tribe:

War Party Three:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
War Party Four:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Five:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Six:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	14 (Average)

#### Raven Tribe:

War Party Four:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
War Party Five:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Average)
War Party Six:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Average)
War Party Seven:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	12 (Green)
War Party Eight:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	12 (Green)

#### Wolf Tribe:

War Party Six:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
War Party Seven:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
War Party Eight:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	16 (Crack)
War Party Nine:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Ten:	II 2×50=100	+0	+0	15 (Seasoned)

#### Ferret Tribe:

War Party Three:	II (2+2)×50=200	+0	+50	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Four:	II (2+2)×50=200	+0	+50	15 (Seasoned)
War Party Five:	II (2+2)×50=200	+0	+50	12 (Green)
War Party Six:	II (2+2)×50=200	+0	+50	12 (Green)

#### Otter Tribe:

War Party Three:	II (2+2)×50=200	+0	+50	14 (Average)
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Subtotals:	2,600	+0	+275	
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Plus: All Pict survivors from Force Roster A.

Totals:

Notes: Pict Bowmen: +2 TS, mostly -50% Msl Bonus (using bows only until close range)

All Morale scores include +1 bonus for fighting a hereditary foe.



# Conan of Cimmeria

<b>ST 19</b> (150 points)	<b>IQ 13</b> (30 points)	<b>Speed: 8</b>
<b>DX 16</b> (80 points)	<b>HT 16</b> (80 points)	<b>Move: 7</b>
	(bonus for running)	
<b>Dodge: 8</b>	<b>Parry: 9</b>	<b>Block: 5</b>

**Damage:** Thrust 2d-1; Swing 3d+1; Greatsword 3d+4 cut, 2d+1 cr; Axe 3d+3; Large Knife 1d+2 cut, 1d+2 imp

### Advantages:

- Absolute Direction (5 points)
- Alertness +3 (15 points)
- Charisma +2 (10 points)
- Combat Reflexes (15 points)
- Danger Sense (15 points)
- High Pain Threshold (10 points)
- Immunity to Disease (10 points)
- Literacy (10 points)
- Luck (15 points)
- Military Rank +4 (20 points)
- Night Vision (10 points)
- Peripheral Vision (15 points)
- Rapid Healing (5 points)
- Strong Will +5 (20 points)
- Toughness DR1 (10 points)

**Disadvantages:**

- Duty: Aquilonian army (-15 points)
- Enemy: Large group, ship captains of Hyborean coastal nations, appear quite rarely (-15 points)
- Enemy: National government, Empire of Turan, appears fairly often (-40 points)
- Phobia: Magic (manophobia) — mild (-10 points)
- Reputation: Pirate, -4, all people from the coast of the Western Ocean, recognized occasionally (-3 points)
- Reputation: Kozak, -4, all Turanians, recognized occasionally (-5 points)
- Sense of Duty: To all women (-10 points)
- Sense of Duty: To comrades (-10 points)
- Stubbornness (-5 points)
- Truthfulness (-5 points)

### Quirks:

Says what he thinks (-1 point)  
Doesn't like to be called a liar (-1 point)  
Speaks with a Cimmerian accent (-1 point)  
Uncomfortable around wizards (-1 point)  
Enjoys carousing (-1 point)

### Skills:

Area Knowledge (Black Coast)-13 (1 point), (Black Kingdoms)-12 (½ point), (Cimmeria)-13 (1 point), (Conajohara)-13 (1 point), (the East)-12 (½ point), (the Pictish Wilderness)-12 (½ point), (Turan)-13 (1 point), (Zamora)-13 (1 point); Axe/Mace-18 (8 points); Blacksmith/TL3-15 (6 points); Boating-15 (1 point); Bow-19 (24 points); Brawling-20 (16 points); Broadsword-21 (32 points); Carousing-17 (4 points);



Climbing-17 (4 points); Crossbow-17 (2 points); Fast-Draw (Arrow)-18 (4 points), (Sword)-19 (8 points); First Aid/TL3-16 (6 points); Fishing-12 ( $\frac{1}{2}$  point); Gambling-15 (6 points); Jumping-17 (2 points); Knife-21 (24 points); Leadership-19 (14 points); Occultism-12 (1 point); Riding-18 (8 points); Running-19 (24 points); Seamanship/TL3-15 (4 points); Shield-19 (8 points); Spear-19 (16 points); Stealth-19 (16 points); Streetwise-15 (6 points); Survival (Desert)-14 (4 points), (Jungle)-14 (4 points), (Mountain)-16 (8 points), (Plains)-16 (8 points); Swimming-16 (1 point); Tactics-18 (14 points); Throwing-18 (16 points); Tracking-16 (8 points); Two-Handed Sword-18 (8 points).

**Languages:**

Aquilonian-11 (½ point); Argossean-11 (½ point); Cimmerian-13 (0 points); Hyperborean-11 (½ point); Hyrkanian-11 (½ point); Khitan-11 (½ point); Kushite-11 (½ point); Nordheimr-11 (½ point); Shemitish-11 (½ point); Turanian-11 (½ point); Zangoran-11 (½ point); Zingaran-11 (½ point).

**Equipment:**

Greatsword, \$800, 7 lbs.  
Axe, \$50, 4 lbs.  
Large knife (in boot), \$40, 1 lb.  
Chainmail hauberk (PD 3/1, DR 4/2), \$230, 25 lbs.  
Steel cap (PD 3, DR 4), \$100, 5 lbs.  
Heavy buckskin boots (PD 2, DR 2), \$80, 3 lbs.  
Buckskin breeches (PD 2, DR 2), \$20, 2 lbs.

Conan is a barbarian from a land on the northern frontier of Aquilonia: Cimmeria. He's around 40 — “with few signs of his years save a more deliberate approach to wenching and the pursuit of trouble.” (*Conan the Warrior*, p. 157) His recent adventures have carried him to the far southern jungles and back. Tiring of magic and civilization, Conan returned to Cimmeria. However, his “retirement” didn't last long. Soon he was in Aquilonia, selling his services on the Westernmarck frontier. He is one of the few survivors of Fort Tuscelan, which fell against an onslaught of savage Picts — placing all of Conajohara province under their control once again.

As this adventure begins, Conan has been given the command of a company of archers. He serves under Governor Lucian at Velitrium.